



# Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges

**Jim Zanotti**

Analyst in Middle Eastern Affairs

April 8, 2011

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

R41761

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE <b>08 APR 2011</b>		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED <b>00-00-2011 to 00-00-2011</b>	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <b>Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges</b>				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) <b>Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress, 101 Independence Avenue SE, Washington, DC, 20540-7500</b>				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT <b>Approved for public release; distribution unlimited</b>					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT <b>Same as Report (SAR)</b>	18. NUMBER OF PAGES <b>50</b>	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a REPORT <b>unclassified</b>	b ABSTRACT <b>unclassified</b>	c THIS PAGE <b>unclassified</b>			

## Summary

Congress and the Obama Administration are seeking to manage longstanding bilateral and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-based defense cooperation with Turkey at a time when a more independent Turkish foreign policy course and changes in regional security conditions are creating new challenges for both countries. Defense cooperation rooted in shared threat perceptions from the Cold War era and built on close U.S. ties with the Turkish military leadership now must be reconciled with a decline of the military's political influence in Turkish society and some negative turns in Turkish popular sentiment toward the United States over the past decade. At the same time, Turkey's importance as a U.S. ally has arguably increased on issues of global significance in its surrounding region that include Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. In early 2011, Turkey's regional role has arguably become even more prominent—exemplified by its significant involvement politically and militarily on the question of NATO's intervention in Libya.

How Congress and the Administration manage defense cooperation with Turkey in this evolving context is likely to have a significant bearing on U.S. national security interests, as well as on both U.S. and Turkish calculations of the mutual benefits and leverage involved in the cooperative relationship. Some officials and analysts believe that, in at least some respects, the United States needs Turkey more than Turkey needs the United States. Others counter that claims of Turkish leverage over the United States are exaggerated.

Possible general congressional and Administration approaches to U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation ("Possible U.S. Policy Approaches") include

- avoiding major recharacterizations of the alliance, while emphasizing and expressing confidence that existing NATO and bilateral relationships—with their long legacies—can address mutual security challenges;
- according high priority to the alliance and revising expectations for it by accommodating new developments within and outside of Turkey;
- linking cooperation in some way to Turkey's relations with certain third-party countries or non-state actors—including Iran, Israel, Hamas, Armenia, and China—or to Turkish actions on issues of U.S. national security interest; and
- using or combining any of these approaches on a case-by-case basis.

Specific issues that remain of significant importance for Congress (see "Specific Issues and Possible Options for Congress"), given its authority to appropriate funds, review major arms sales, consider non-binding resolutions, and provide general oversight include the following:

- *Continued military access to Turkish bases and transport corridors:* The ongoing availability to the United States and NATO of Turkish bases and transport corridors—which have been used heavily for military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya—is valuable and remains a possible point of contention and leverage. The extent of its importance and of alternatives may be subject to further analysis.
- *Future of Turkey-Israel relations:* U.S. efforts to maintain alliances with both Turkey and Israel could be made more complicated if relations between them do not improve—potentially influencing the regional security environment.

- *Missile defense radar:* Whether Turkey agrees in 2011 to host a U.S. forward-deployed radar for missile defense as part of the NATO system may depend on its perceptions of whether doing so would be more likely to cultivate stability or to be unduly provocative to neighboring countries.
- *Arms sales and industrial cooperation:* Turkey continues to seek advanced military equipment from U.S. sources, particularly with respect to fighter and drone aircraft, helicopters, and missile defense systems (see “Arms Sales and Industrial Cooperation”). At the same time, Turkey is increasingly diversifying its defense contacts and procurement relationships with non-NATO countries.
- *Military and security assistance:* Although the United States no longer provides major annual grant aid to Turkey’s military, assistance continues to foster cooperation on counterterrorism, law enforcement, and military training and education.

For more information on related issues, please see CRS Report R41368, *Turkey: Politics of Identity and Power*, and CRS Report RL34642, *Turkey: Selected Foreign Policy Issues and U.S. Views*, both by Jim Zanotti.

## Contents

Introduction: Issues for Congress .....	1
Overview of Cooperation .....	2
Background .....	2
Turkey's Importance to U.S. National Security .....	4
Cooperation During the Obama Administration .....	6
In General.....	6
On Libya and NATO's Role .....	8
Military's Changing Role in Turkish Society .....	11
Major Areas of Defense Cooperation.....	14
NATO .....	14
Turkey's Future Role.....	14
Missile Defense .....	16
Afghanistan .....	17
Iraq.....	18
Pursuing Stability and Countering Iranian Influence .....	18
Neutralizing the PKK? .....	19
Bases and Transport Corridors.....	22
Possible U.S. Policy Approaches .....	23
Specific Issues and Possible Options for Congress.....	26
Access to Turkish Bases and Transport Corridors .....	26
Reaction to Downturn in Turkey-Israel Relations .....	26
Missile Defense Radar and NATO.....	27
Arms Sales and Industrial Cooperation.....	28
Congressional Notification Process .....	30
Drones to Counter the PKK in Northern Iraq? .....	30
Fighter Aircraft .....	31
Missile Defense Systems.....	32
Military and Security Assistance .....	33
Monitoring Turkey's Joint Military Activities .....	33
Involving the United States and NATO.....	33
Involving Non-NATO Militaries.....	34
Conclusion.....	34

## Figures

Figure 1. Map of U.S. and NATO Military Presence and Transport Routes in Turkey.....	5
Figure 2. Turkey's Military and Defense Establishment – Facts and Figures .....	13

## Tables

Table 1. U.S. Military and Security Assistance to Turkey.....	4
Table 2. Significant U.S.-Origin Arms Transfers or Expected Arms Transfers to Turkey .....	29

## **Appendixes**

Appendix A. Historical Overview.....	37
Appendix B. Turkish Procurement and Defense Industry Policy .....	43

## **Contacts**

Author Contact Information .....	45
----------------------------------	----

## Introduction: Issues for Congress

The United States enjoys a strong legacy of defense cooperation with Turkey, both bilaterally and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), dating from the onset of the Cold War. For both countries, mutual cooperation has major implications for national security priorities in Turkey's surrounding region—particularly the greater Middle East. A more independent Turkish foreign policy course—reflected in recent international events involving Iran, Israel, and other countries—has raised concerns among some Members of Congress. This, coupled with a decline of the military's influence in Turkish society, may affect prospects and present challenges for bilateral and NATO defense cooperation, while also generating ongoing debate over which country needs the other more to pursue and achieve its national security objectives.

A challenge for U.S. officials—particularly in the White House, the Defense Department (DOD; both civilian and military branches), and the State Department—is to adjust future modes of bilateral interaction with Turkey on defense matters to account for greater fluidity within the internal Turkish civil-military power structure. Determining proper interlocutors for both countries on different but interrelated questions of (1) grand strategy (which involves political objectives beyond pure military matters), (2) military strategy, and (3) tactical and operational objectives could lead to an approach that is more multidimensional than the well-established pattern some observers see in which the State Department and other U.S. officials rely on the “Pentagon to wield its influence.”<sup>1</sup>

Areas of potential interest or concern for Congress, as well as other U.S. policymakers, include the following:

- *Overall Defense Relationship:* Reconciling regional perceptions of growing Turkish influence and declining U.S. influence with persisting Turkish interest in defense cooperation to address immediate security and deterrence needs.
- *NATO/Missile Defense:* Turkey's role in NATO, both in (1) defining the scope of alliance action and objectives in possible cases of intervention, such as Libya; and (2) regarding aspects of alliance-wide defense, such as an approved missile defense system that could feature a radar station and other elements in Turkey to counter threats from Iran and elsewhere.

---

<sup>1</sup> Henri J. Barkey, “Turkey's New Global Role,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, November 17, 2010, available at <http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/?fa=view&id=41952>. The challenge for U.S. officials to manage cooperation with Turkey could be magnified by the way the U.S. government is structured to work with Turkey. Former U.S. ambassador to Turkey Mark Parris has said, “For reasons of self-definition and Cold War logic, Turkey is considered a European nation. It is therefore assigned, for purposes of policy development and implementation, to the subdivisions responsible for Europe: the European Bureau (EUR) at the State Department; the European Command (EUCOM) at the Pentagon; the Directorate for Europe at the [National Security Council (NSC)], etc. Since the end of the Cold War, however, and progressively since the 1990-91 Gulf War and 9/11, the most serious issues in U.S.-Turkish relations – and virtually all of the controversial ones – have arisen in areas outside “Europe.” The majority, in fact, stem from developments in areas which in Washington are the responsibility of offices dealing with the Middle East: the Bureau for Near East Affairs (NEA) at State; Central Command (CENTCOM) at the Pentagon; the Near East and South Asia Directorate at NSC.” Omer Taspinar, “The Rise of Turkish Gaullism: Getting Turkish-American Relations Right,” *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 1, winter 2011, quoting an unpublished 2008 paper by Mark Parris.

- *Iraq and Afghanistan*: Cooperating with Turkey to achieve stability and a reduced threat of terrorism from Iraq and Afghanistan through (1) joint counterterrorism efforts, (2) use of Turkish bases and territory for cargo transport, (3) possible arms sales, and (4) direct involvement of Turkish non-combat troops (in Afghanistan) and trainers.
- *Israel*: Addressing implications of increasingly distant Turkey-Israel relations on U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation.
- *Armenian Genocide Resolution*: Continuing defense cooperation with Turkey in light of a possible adverse Turkish reaction to a potential U.S. congressional resolution or presidential statement characterizing World War I-era actions of the Ottoman Empire against Armenians as genocide. Expectations regarding the likely nature and extent of a possible adverse Turkish reaction vary.<sup>2</sup>
- *Future Prospects for Various Modes of Defense Cooperation*: These include (1) joint exercises and missions; (2) stationing of U.S./NATO personnel and arms (including a reported nuclear weapons arsenal) in Turkey; (3) forms of defense-related U.S. aid, including International Military Education and Training; and (4) defense industrial cooperation.

## Overview of Cooperation

### Background

Turkey's NATO accession in 1952 during the early years of the Cold War was premised upon the concept of a "mutuality of benefits." Turkey received U.S. security guarantees against Soviet aggression. In return, the United States and its other Western allies could (1) station and base troops and equipment in Turkey for defensive and intelligence-gathering purposes, (2) count on Turkish control over Soviet access to the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits and on Turkish co-belligerency in case of an attack, and (3) contain Turkish-Greek tensions within the NATO umbrella.

Although events over the last few years have strained U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation to some extent, tension in the bilateral relationship is not new. According to one scholar, "Apart from a honeymoon in the early 1950s, the US-Turkish alliance has always been troubled."<sup>3</sup> Turkey's relations with Greece and its involvement in Cyprus have been the focus of many of these troubles. When in 1974 Turkey sent troops using U.S.-supplied arms to intervene on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot minority, Congress responded by placing an embargo on U.S. military grants and arms sales to Turkey that lasted from 1975 until 1978,<sup>4</sup> despite objections voiced by the executive branch. The embargo delivered a serious blow to the Turkish military's operational readiness. Turkey, in turn, closed U.S. defense and intelligence installations on Turkish territory throughout the period of the embargo (except for those installations that had a purely NATO function). In

---

<sup>2</sup> Morton Abramowitz, a former U.S. ambassador to Turkey, provided an analysis of the issue in a March 19, 2010 article for *nationalinterest.org* entitled "The Never-Ending Armenian Genocide Resolution."

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Mango, *The Turks Today* (New York: The Overlook Press, 2004), p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., Foreign Assistance Act (P.L. 93-559) for FY1975 enacted December 30, 1974. No similar measures were taken against Greece, even though its troops also used U.S. equipment in Cyprus.



addition, according to a 2005 article in the journal *Turkish Studies*, “The resentment and loss of confidence in the US transformed the alliance to a great extent and made Turkey focus on two important strategic priorities from then onwards: to diversify the sources of arms imports and to improve the development of a domestic arms industry.”<sup>5</sup>

Yet, some believe that the nature and degree of U.S.-Turkey tensions, and how they affect mutual threat perceptions and defense priorities, might be changing. Longtime Turkey analyst Henri Barkey of the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace wrote in 2010 that “Turkish-American relations were always difficult and acrimonious even in the best of times.... What is different now is that the issues over which Turkey and America differ are far more numerous and complicated than in the past.”<sup>6</sup> The vote of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament) in 2003 not to allow U.S. troops to use Turkey’s border with Iraq as a second front in their invasion of the country showed the United States that in its defense relationship with Turkey, it could no longer rely solely on past legacies of cooperation and its close ties with the Turkish military.

The onset of more numerous and complicated differences within the U.S.-Turkey alliance may be reflected in Turkish popular sentiment toward the United States. Results from a December 2010 poll stated that despite the longtime alliance, and despite several potential threats along Turkey’s borders, the Turkish people see the United States as its biggest external threat by a wide margin.<sup>7</sup> This apparent sentiment exists within a context of Turks’ generally low favorability ratings for foreign countries, partly based on historical concerns about encirclement by outside powers—particularly the West and Russia. Reports posit that the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq is a major shaper of the Turkish people’s threat perception,<sup>8</sup> along with U.S. closeness to Israel and congressional action on Armenia.<sup>9</sup> However, a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) poll released in March 2011 indicates that—though still negative on balance—Turkish perceptions of U.S. influence in the world have improved significantly from a year earlier.<sup>10</sup> Future trends in these perceptions are likely to influence democratically elected Turkish leaders’ approaches to strategic cooperation.

---

<sup>5</sup> Aylin Guney, “An Anatomy of the Transformation of the US-Turkish Alliance: From ‘Cold War’ to ‘War on Iraq,’” *Turkish Studies*, vol. 6, no. 3, September 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Barkey, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> Sevil Kucukkosum, “Turks see U.S. as biggest external threat, poll results show,” *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, January 5, 2011. The poll, taken by the MetroPOLL Strategic and Social Research Center, which is affiliated with Turkey’s ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), stated that 43% of respondents viewed the United States as Turkey’s primary external threat, with Israel in second place with 24%. Iran was a distant third with 3%. Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Although it received little enduring attention in the United States, the so-called “hood incident” connected with the 2003 Iraq war exacerbated popular Turkish opposition to the U.S. invasion. On July 4, 2003, U.S. soldiers captured approximately 11 Turkish special forces soldiers during a raid on a safehouse in the northern Iraqi city of Suleimaniyah. Those captured were under suspicion for involvement in a plot to assassinate the Kurdish governor of Kirkuk province. After their arrest, the Turkish soldiers had hoods put over their heads and were interrogated before Turkish military and diplomatic protestations led to their release 60 hours later. Since the 1990s, there had been reports of Turkish special forces units operating in northern Iraq and allying themselves with an Iraqi Turkomen militia to monitor and operate against the PKK. See “A partnership at risk?,” *Economist*, July 10, 2003. Though neither side apologized for its part in the hood incident, both issued statements of regret. The resumption of PKK attacks on targets in Turkey following the Iraq invasion led to Turkish perceptions that the United States was insufficiently aware of or concerned about the difficulties these attacks present to Turkey.

<sup>9</sup> See Kucukkosum, op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> BBC World Service Poll, “Views of US Continue to Improve in 2011 BBC Country Rating Poll,” March 7, 2011, available at [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/mar11/BBCevalsUS\\_Mar11\\_rpt.pdf](http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/mar11/BBCevalsUS_Mar11_rpt.pdf). The poll, which was conducted from December 2010 to February 2011, claimed that 35% of Turks believe that U.S. influence in the world is positive (up from 13% in 2010), and that 49% believe that U.S. influence is negative (down from 68% in 2010).

Since 1948, the United States has provided Turkey with approximately \$13.8 billion in overall military assistance—\$8.2 billion in monetary and in-kind grants and \$5.6 billion in loans. However, the end of the Cold War and Turkey’s increasing economic and military self-sufficiency led to the discontinuance of most aid. Current annual military and security assistance is limited to International Military Education and Training (IMET); International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE); and Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) funds. For a more detailed breakdown of this assistance, see **Table 1** below; and for a historical overview and chronology of U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation, see **Appendix A**.

**Table 1. U.S. Military and Security Assistance to Turkey**

(historical \$ in millions)

Fiscal Year(s)	Foreign Mil. Fin.	Excess Defense Articles	Int’l Mil. Ed. and Training	NADR	INCLE	Other Grants	Total Grants	Loans
1948-1975	—	869.0	111.8	—	—	3,406.0	4,386.8	185.0
1976-1981	—	—	3.4	—	1.0	10.5	14.9	952.9
1982-1992	1,884.0	—	36.4	—	6.7	1,362.1	3,289.2	2,769.1
1993-2001	—	205.1	14.0	0.1	3.2	—	222.4	1,678.1
2002-2008	170.0	21.1	23.7	8.6	0.1	—	223.5	—
2009	1.0	—	3.2	1.9	0.5	—	6.6	—
2010	—	—	5.0	3.0	—	—	8.0	—
2011 Request	—	—	4.0	1.4	0.5	—	5.9	—
2012 Request	—	—	4.0	—	0.5	—	4.5	—
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,055.0</b>	<b>1,095.2</b>	<b>205.5</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>4,778.6</b>	<b>8,160.8</b>	<b>5,585.1</b>

**Source:** U.S. Agency for International Development, U.S. State Department.

**Notes:** All amounts are approximate. NADR stands for Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs; INCLE stands for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement.

## Turkey’s Importance to U.S. National Security

Arguably, Turkey is a more significant ally for the United States at present than during the Cold War. With several challenges to U.S. national security emanating from the greater Middle East, the United States has already shown that it seeks to use Turkey’s geographic location for its advantage, and it is likely that future U.S. regional interests will dictate a similar U.S. outlook. Given Turkey’s location near several global hotspots, the availability of its territory for the stationing and transport of arms, cargo, and personnel remains valuable for the United States and NATO (see **Figure 1** and “Bases and Transport Corridors” below). In addition, Turkey, with its sizeable armed forces and modern weapons systems, is considered to be among the strongest military powers in its region, and continuing Turkish economic growth and increases in domestic military spending and arms exports support the view that it will play a major role in regional security for years to come.<sup>11</sup> As Turkey’s regional influence expands through economic, political,

<sup>11</sup> The National Intelligence Council reported in 2008 that “Turkey’s recent economic track record of increased growth, the vitality of Turkey’s emerging middle class and its geostrategic locale raise the prospect of a growing regional role (continued...) ”

and cultural means, its importance has arguably increased for the United States on issues of global significance that include Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Israeli-Palestinian issues.

In early 2011, Turkey's regional role has arguably become even more prominent—exemplified by its significant involvement politically and militarily on the question of NATO's intervention in Libya—as political change and unrest generates international debate about links between internal governance, humanitarian and civil society issues, and regional security. Moreover, Turkey's growing importance as a regional energy transport hub whose supply sources are not limited to (even though they include) Russia and Iran elevates the continued importance of Turkey's security for world energy markets.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 1. Map of U.S. and NATO Military Presence and Transport Routes in Turkey**



**Source:** DOD; NATO.

**Notes:** All locations are approximate. Incirlik air base is a Turkish base, part of which is used for limited purposes by the U.S. military.

This affects both U.S. and Turkish calculations of the mutual benefits and leverage of defense cooperation. The United States hopes that involving Turkey's military and territory in various defense initiatives (such as in Libya and Afghanistan, and with NATO missile defense) both provides greater influence for the United States with regional actors and politically legitimizes

(...continued)

in the Middle East." U.S. National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World*, November 2008, available at [http://www.dni.gov/nic/PDF\\_2025/2025\\_Global\\_Trends\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.dni.gov/nic/PDF_2025/2025_Global_Trends_Final_Report.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion and maps of various existing and proposed pipelines and energy transit routes through and near Turkey, see Transatlantic Academy, *Getting to Zero: Turkey, Its Neighbors, and the West*, June 2010, available at <http://www.transatlanticacademy.org/sites/default/files/publications/GettingtoZeroFINAL.pdf>.

U.S. actions to Muslim populations. Turkish leaders use the importance the United States confers upon Turkey's role both to seek benefits from the United States and to elevate their prestige in dealings with other countries. At the same time, however, many high-profile Turkish officials and international analysts speak of increased Turkish economic and military self-sufficiency and a relative decline of U.S. influence in the region as other actors become more consequential.<sup>13</sup>

Although Turkey is an increasingly important regional and even global player in the use of its political, economic, and cultural influence, many of its national security priorities remain concentrated on (1) protecting its borders and population, especially from the transnational threat posed by Kurdish militants; and (2) deterring would-be aggressors in its neighborhood without provoking them. Its defense cooperation with the United States, therefore, presents a dilemma. Avoiding provocations of those of Turkey's neighbors whom the United States perceives as adversaries or potential adversaries might be difficult for Turkey to the extent that the neighbors view Turkey as enabling U.S. actions in the region.

## **Cooperation During the Obama Administration**

### **In General**

Developments during the Obama Administration on matters both bilateral and under the NATO umbrella have led to new questions about the extent to which Turkish and U.S. national security goals and defense priorities overlap. In April 2009, President Obama, speaking of a "model partnership," visited Turkey during his first presidential trip abroad and addressed the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament) in Ankara, saying that "Turkey is a critical ally.... And Turkey and the United States must stand together—and work together—to overcome the challenges of our time."

One month later, Ahmet Davutoglu, a foreign policy academic-turned-advisor to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan from Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), became Turkey's foreign minister, giving Davutoglu greater visibility with regard to the more independent and assertive Turkish foreign policy course he had helped to establish. This course envisions Turkey being "in the centre of its own sphere of influence" through "strategic depth" (based largely on regional soft power ostensibly based on geopolitical, cultural, historical, and economic influence) and having "zero problems" with the countries in its vicinity.<sup>14</sup>

Subsequent Turkish and U.S. actions and statements on Armenia, Iran, and Israeli-Palestinian issues revealed tensions between the Obama Administration and AKP government visions for overcoming regional challenges. These tensions spilled over into bilateral defense relations.<sup>15</sup> In March 2010, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs reported H.Res. 252 for consideration by the full House (by a vote of 23-22). H.Res. 252 characterized actions of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey's predecessor state) against Armenians from 1915 to 1917 as genocide. Similar resolutions had been reported multiple times by the same committee for full House consideration since 2000, and by various House and Senate committees from 1984 to 1990. Neither H.Res. 252

---

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., "Great sacrifices, small rewards," *Economist*, December 29, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> See Gareth Jenkins, "On the edge – The AKP shifts Turkey's political compass," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, August 2, 2010.

<sup>15</sup> See CRS Report RL34642, *Turkey: Selected Foreign Policy Issues and U.S. Views*, by Jim Zanotti.

nor any of the other resolutions passed. Nevertheless, in response to the March 2010 committee action, Turkey recalled its ambassador from the United States for one month, and at least one prominent AKP lawmaker reportedly warned that “the relationship would be downgraded on every level” in the event of House passage of the resolution (which as stated above, did not occur). This warning was commonly perceived as including a threat to at least partially or temporarily curtail U.S. access to Turkish bases and territory that it uses to transport non-lethal cargo to military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> Turkey also had briefly recalled its ambassador from the United States after a nearly identical resolution was reported by the same committee in October 2007.

Then, in May and June 2010, two developments raised significant concerns regarding Turkey-U.S. defense relations:

1. Turkey’s Iranian nuclear diplomacy with Brazil—the Tehran Declaration on possible nuclear fuel swaps, followed by the Turkey-Brazil “no” vote on U.N. Security Council enhanced sanctions on Iran in Resolution 1929.
2. The *Mavi Marmara* Gaza flotilla incident and its aftermath, which publicly exacerbated the Turkey-Israel tensions that had been worsening since Israel’s military operations in Hamas-controlled Gaza in December 2008.<sup>17</sup>

Some Members of Congress and Administration officials, viewing Turkey’s rhetoric and actions as (1) undermining a top U.S. priority in the Iranian nuclear issue and (2) being at odds with the U.S. characterization of Israel as an ally and Iran as a threat, openly questioned Turkey’s orientation on global security issues. Philip Gordon, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, said in June 2010,

We think Turkey remains committed to NATO, Europe and the United States, but that needs to be demonstrated. There are people asking questions about it in a way that is new, and that in itself is a bad thing that makes it harder for the United States to support some of the things that Turkey would like to see us support.<sup>18</sup>

Officials’ and analysts’ questions about Turkey’s foreign policy direction intensified following reports that the 2010 version of the Turkish National Security Policy Document (MGSB, also known as the “Red Book”) downgraded or did not explicitly list possible threats from Iran, Syria, Greece, and Armenia that were listed in previous versions, and at the same time reportedly defined Israel’s actions in the region as a threat—claiming that these actions induce conditions of instability.<sup>19</sup>

Turkey’s alignment has major global implications and is driven by a variety of factors, including the AKP government’s activist foreign policy.<sup>20</sup> The United States has limited influence over these factors. One of the main U.S. levers could be its ability to boost Turkey’s short-term military

---

<sup>16</sup> Robert Tait and Ewen McCaskill, “Turkey threatens ‘serious consequences’ after US vote on Armenian genocide,” *Guardian* (UK), March 5, 2010.

<sup>17</sup> See CRS Report R41275, *Israel’s Blockade of Gaza, the Mavi Marmara Incident, and Its Aftermath*, by Carol Migdalovitz.

<sup>18</sup> “US official: Turkey must demonstrate commitment to West,” *Today’s Zaman*, June 28, 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Ercan Yavuz, “Israeli-caused instability makes its way to Turkey’s security document,” *Today’s Zaman*, October 29, 2010.

<sup>20</sup> See CRS Report RL34642, *Turkey: Selected Foreign Policy Issues and U.S. Views*, by Jim Zanotti.

capabilities (see “Arms Sales and Industrial Cooperation” below). However, the usefulness of such a lever could be fleeting, and its longer-term merits for regional security would be debatable. In the immediate aftermath of the Gaza flotilla incident and the U.N. Security Council Iran sanctions vote, the resulting prospect of greater congressional scrutiny of Turkey’s objectives and actions reportedly led President Obama to warn Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan of the difficulty of gaining congressional approval for potential foreign military sales (FMS) of weapons systems—including drone aircraft—Turkey has reportedly sought for use against the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization).<sup>21</sup> In this political climate, speculation arose about the possibility of increased support in Congress and the Administration for H.Res. 252 or another resolution or presidential statement regarding Armenian genocide claims.<sup>22</sup>

U.S. concerns about Turkey’s position on Iran were somewhat allayed at the November 2010 NATO summit in Lisbon, Portugal, when Turkey joined its allies in approving a new strategic concept that specified the defense of territory and populations from ballistic missiles as a NATO mission. Separately, however, no decision has been announced on whether Turkey will agree to host a U.S. forward-deployed radar as a key element in the first phase of the Obama Administration’s European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to missile defense. The Administration’s timeline for the EPAA calls for such a radar to be deployed in southeastern Europe by the end of 2011,<sup>23</sup> and the *Wall Street Journal* reported in October 2010 that Turkey “is the location of choice ... according to military analysts and diplomats.”<sup>24</sup> At the Lisbon summit, Turkey joined in the consensus of all NATO allies welcoming the EPAA as a “valuable national contribution to the NATO missile defense architecture,” along with “other possible voluntary contributions by allies.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, the question of the radar’s deployment is important for both U.S. and NATO missile defense plans. U.S. and other international perceptions of Turkish cooperation on Iran may also improve following Turkey’s March 2011 interdiction of two Iranian cargo planes en route to Syria over its airspace, from one of which Turkish officials reportedly confiscated a weapons cache pursuant to the U.N. Security Council embargo on Iranian arms exports and its enforcement mechanisms promulgated in Resolutions 1747 and 1929.<sup>26</sup>

## On Libya and NATO’s Role

As political unrest has spread throughout the Middle East in early 2011, President Obama has consulted frequently with Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan on political change in Egypt and other events occurring in the region. Following the passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973

---

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Dombey, “US issues arms-deal ultimatum to Turkey,” *Financial Times*, August 15, 2010.

<sup>22</sup> See, e.g., Ariel Cohen, “Congressmen Talk Turkey,” Heritage Foundation, June 21, 2010, available at <http://blog.heritage.org/?p=36681>.

<sup>23</sup> The proposed elements of the EPAA and a deployment timeline are described in a September 17, 2009 White House press release available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/FACT-SHEET-US-Missile-Defense-Policy-A-Phased-Adaptive-Approach-for-Missile-Defense-in-Europe/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/FACT-SHEET-US-Missile-Defense-Policy-A-Phased-Adaptive-Approach-for-Missile-Defense-in-Europe/). See also CRS Report R41549, *Missile Defense and NATO’s Lisbon Summit*, by Steven A. Hildreth and Carl Ek.

<sup>24</sup> Marc Champion, “Turkey in Dilemma Over NATO Shield,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 27, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> NATO Lisbon Summit Declaration, November 20, 2010, available at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm?mode=pressrelease).

<sup>26</sup> Louis Charbonneau, “EXCLUSIVE-Turkey says seizes illegal Iran arms shipment,” *Reuters*, March 31, 2011. According to this article, the cache included 60 Kalashnikov AK-47 assault rifles, 14 BKC/Bixi machine guns, nearly 8,000 rounds of BKC/AK-47 ammunition, 560 60-mm mortar shells, and 1,288 120-mm mortar shells. *Ibid*.

on March 17, 2011, which provided an international mandate to protect Libyan civilians,<sup>27</sup> the United States, France, and the United Kingdom began armed intervention in Libya against forces loyal to Muammar al Qadhafi's regime, initially repelling a planned assault on the Qadhafi-opposition stronghold of Benghazi.

Turkey's position regarding NATO's role in the intervention has become increasingly important given both its geographical closeness to Libya and its status as a Muslim-majority country with significant cultural and historical ties to Libya. Before passage of Resolution 1973, Erdogan publicly opposed the idea of NATO involvement in Libya. Even though he criticized Qadhafi's violent suppression of protests and the incipient uprising and advocated a transfer of power in accord with Libyan citizens' wishes, Erdogan sought to facilitate a peaceful transfer of power through consultation with Qadhafi and Libyan opposition forces. After the passage of Resolution 1973 and the initial U.S.-led intervention, however, Turkey decided to help implement the resolution as part of a NATO-led coalition, after playing a major role in deliberations with the United States and other key allies.

Rather than a ratification of its allies' prior actions outside of NATO, Turkish leaders' support for and active participation in NATO's involvement in Libya appears to be a calculated decision both (1) to keep the scope of Western military involvement limited by actively steering NATO's political and operational decision-making processes, based on Turkey's interpretation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973; and (2) to avoid exclusion from a prominent role in brokering a resolution to the crisis.<sup>28</sup> On March 23, Turkish President Abdullah Gul said the following about pre-NATO actions in Libya:

[T]he aim (of coalition forces) is not the liberation of the Libyan people. There are hidden agendas and differing interests. I worry that the things that happened in Iraq may be repeated in Libya....

Everything should have been planned beforehand. What will be done against Gaddafi? How will the Libyan opposition be involved? Will there be a ground operation? All these should have been decided in NATO. But some decided to act with opportunist intentions and start a fire instead.<sup>29</sup>

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and Foreign Minister Davutoglu have indicated that Turkish forces will not undertake a combat role and that, as military operations continue, Turkey wants continual political consultation both among members of the NATO-led coalition and among the coalition, United Nations, Arab League, and African Union. Turkish officials have publicly stated

---

<sup>27</sup> In addition to authorizing the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Libya, Resolution 1973 authorized all U.N. countries, "acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements ... to take all necessary measures ... to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory".

<sup>28</sup> See Ipek Yezdani, "Turkey seeks ways to stay in NATO game," *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, March 24, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> "Wary of France, Turkey Wants NATO in Charge of Libya," *Today's Zaman*, March 25, 2011. Turkish officials objected vociferously to what they perceived as an overly aggressive stance from France. They were clearly displeased with being excluded from the U.S.-U.K.-France meetings in Paris that preceded the initial coalition air strikes. France explained that Turkey had been excluded because of Erdogan's previous statements of opposition to military intervention and to a NATO role in Libya. Many media reports have painted the subsequent NATO deliberations as largely a contest between France, which favored a coalition possibly outside NATO command and freer rein to take offensive action; and Turkey, which, like the United States, favored having NATO control the entire operation. France-Turkey tensions owe much to France's leading role in opposing full EU membership for Turkey.

their desire for a cease-fire as soon as possible that will allow the Libyan people to determine their own political future. Other NATO member states have also expressed concerns and set conditions for their involvement.

The parameters Turkey and other NATO allies have set for maintaining the NATO-led coalition, based on their respective interpretations of the international legitimacy of NATO's intervention under Resolution 1973, could compromise the room for strategic maneuver of the United States and certain other allies if events lead them to believe that more offensive action against Qadhafi's forces or the regime itself is advisable in order to avoid a protracted civil war. In that case, the United States and like-minded coalition members could ultimately be compelled to choose between their desired objectives and the possible alienation or even defection of Turkey and other actors from the coalition.<sup>30</sup>

The Turkish Parliament voted on March 24—less than three months before national elections planned for June—to permit the use of Turkish ground, air, and naval forces in Libya for up to a year pursuant to the terms of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 and its precursor, Resolution 1970. Erdogan announced on March 27 that Turkey would take direct responsibility for three humanitarian-assistance-related tasks within the NATO-led coalition: “the takeover of Benghazi airport for the delivery of humanitarian aid, the task about control of the air corridor and the involvement of Turkish naval forces in the corridor between Benghazi and Crete.”<sup>31</sup>

Reportedly, Turkey is contributing at least six ships to NATO's naval fleet to enforce the Libya arms embargo—four frigates, a submarine, and an auxiliary warship. In addition, the aerial mission is being commanded from Turkey at NATO's Allied Air Component Command in Izmir (see **Figure 1**), and Turkey has contributed at least 10 aircraft to support the arms embargo and humanitarian assistance efforts.<sup>32</sup>

*Defense News* has speculated that designating the Izmir command center for use in Operation Unified Protector could influence whether it survives a reform process debated by many NATO member states that is aimed at streamlining the alliance's command structure:

Turkey and NATO, only a few weeks ago, disputed a NATO plan to close down its air command center in Izmir, despite strong Turkish objections.

Turkish Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul in early March said that “Turkey would struggle hard against such a plan.”

Some analysts think assigning Izmir as a sub-command structure for the Libyan mission may strengthen the Turkish case. A final decision on the future of the Izmir [command center] will be made at a NATO summit in June.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> The principle of consensus or unanimity that governs NATO gives each ally virtual veto power over the alliance's political and military decisions.

<sup>31</sup> “Turkey to assume control of Benghazi airport in Libya,” *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, March 28, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> For more information on the NATO-led operation, see CRS Report R41725, *Operation Odyssey Dawn (Libya): Background and Issues for Congress*, coordinated by Jeremiah Gertler.

<sup>33</sup> Burak Ege Bekdil and Umit Enginsoy, “Turkey to Have Triple Role in Libya Mission,” *Defense News*, March 29, 2011.



It is not known whether the fate of NATO's Izmir command center was explicitly discussed or negotiated during the deliberations that led to Turkey's approval of and participation in Operation Unified Protector, but according to the Atlantic Council's "NATO Source" blog, efforts by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to convince Turkey to agree to the command center's closure during an early April trip to Ankara were unsuccessful.<sup>34</sup>

## **Military's Changing Role in Turkish Society**

Since the formative days of the Turkish republic under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the 1920s and 1930s, the Turkish military has played a predominant role not only in Turkey's external defense,<sup>35</sup> but also in forging unity (often, in the early republican years, by helping implement Ataturk's reforms throughout the country) and keeping internal order. As the guarantor of stability, Turkey's military intervened in 1960, 1971, and 1980 to replace governments that it deemed had lost control of the country or had steered it away from the foundational secular republican principles established by Ataturk in the 1920s.<sup>36</sup>

The military's preeminence within the Turkish government and society at large gave it primacy over its civilian counterparts in bilateral and NATO defense cooperation matters with the United States. As longtime Turkey analyst Gareth Jenkins has explained,

In theory, the [Turkish military hierarchy, known as the Turkish General Staff or TGS] is subordinate to the Prime Ministry. In practice, it is autonomous. The Ministry of National Defense (MND) has no authority over the TGS, and its responsibilities are confined to conscription, defence procurement and relations with other ministries. In Turkish protocol the chief of staff ranks ahead of the Minister of National Defence and second only to the prime minister.<sup>37</sup>

In the years since the 1980 military coup reestablished Turkish internal stability, the following interrelated factors have contributed to the relative weakening of the military's position within Turkish government and society:

- The subsequent liberalization of the Turkish economy contributed to the economic and political empowerment of a middle class drawn from traditional Turkish communities and largely sympathetic to Islamic values. A consequent increase in populist sentiment has posed political challenges to the military and to

---

<sup>34</sup> According to the blog, "Erdogan reportedly told Rasmussen that NATO's Izmir base could only be closed after Turkey becomes a European Union member, claiming that the base is the single component that maintains Turkey's links with trans-Atlantic space." Jorge Benitez, "Rasmussen fails to persuade Turkey to close Izmir base," *acus.org/natosource*, April 7, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> The Ataturk-led Turkish army was responsible for driving out invading European powers following the end of World War I to prevent the partition of the core Ottoman lands of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia.

<sup>36</sup> In 1997, the military did not directly overthrow the government, but in what has been called a "post-modern" coup, compelled the dissolution of the first-ever Islamist-led coalition government in the wake of manifestations of public Islamist sentiment. In the years following the collapse of the government, junior members of the former coalition-leading Islamist party (former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan's Refah (Welfare) Party), including Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Abdullah Gul, formed the currently ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP), which they have characterized since the AKP's inception as a center-right reformist party without an Islamist agenda.

<sup>37</sup> Gareth Jenkins, *Context and Circumstance: The Turkish Military and Politics*, International Institute for Strategic Studies, Adelphi Paper 337, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

- other so-called guardians of Turkey's secular elite (including academia and the judiciary).
- The Islamic-leaning Justice and Development Party (AKP) won a parliamentary majority in 2002 and subsequently enacted reforms strengthening civilian democratic institutions, sometimes at the military's expense, in line with EU accession requirements.<sup>38</sup> In 2007 national elections, the AKP garnered 12% more of the vote than it received in 2002.<sup>39</sup>
  - The failed attempts or purported attempts by elements within the military, the judiciary, the opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), and others within the so-called Turkish secular elite to thwart the AKP on key issues. Events include
    - the 2007 election by Parliament of AKP member and former Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul as Turkey's President;
    - the alleged Ergenekon/Sledgehammer plots to undermine or overthrow the government;
    - the 2008 Constitutional Court case attempting to ban and dissolve the AKP; and
    - the September 2010 passage of amendments to the 1982 military-backed constitution in a nationwide referendum, increasing military and judicial accountability to civilian and democratic institutions.<sup>40</sup>

Preparations for the first external audit of Turkish defense spending in 2011, reported by *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, further demonstrate the gradual subjection of military autonomy to civilian oversight.<sup>41</sup> Some Turkish analysts assert that curbs on the military's control over spending, involvement in the defense industry, and power as an economic actor through its large pension fund (known by its Turkish acronym OYAK) would need to go even further to make the military sufficiently democratically accountable.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> According to Steven Cook of the Council on Foreign Relations: "The most important changes were made to the National Security Council (known more commonly by its Turkish acronym, MGK), which had been the primary channel through which the officers influenced Turkish politics." Steven A. Cook, "The Weakening of Turkey's Military," Council on Foreign Relations Expert Brief, March 1, 2010, available at [http://www.cfr.org/publication/21548/weakening\\_of\\_turkeys\\_military.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/21548/weakening_of_turkeys_military.html).

<sup>39</sup> The AKP's popularity in 2007 elections could be seen as a combination of multiple factors, among which could be (1) the significant and sustained economic growth that most analysts believe was partly facilitated by International Monetary Fund-mandated anti-inflation reforms enacted in 2001 (the year before it came to power), (2) general support for the AKP's policy and reform agenda, and (3) the lack of a compelling or coherent opposition.

<sup>40</sup> "Balance of power," *Economist*, October 21, 2010.

<sup>41</sup> "Armed Forces, Turkey," op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Ismet Akca, *Military-Economic Structure in Turkey: Present Situation, Problems, and Solutions*. Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) Publications, July 2010, available at [http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD\\_OBJS/PDF/DEMP/ENG/gsr-2-eng.pdf](http://www.tesev.org.tr/UD_OBJS/PDF/DEMP/ENG/gsr-2-eng.pdf).

## Figure 2. Turkey's Military and Defense Establishment – Facts and Figures

The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) are commanded by the Chief of the Turkish General Staff (TGS), who, since August 2010, has been General Isik Kosaner<sup>a</sup> (pronounced koh-SHAW-ner). The Chief of TGS customarily serves a two-year term.

**517,100** Est. total manpower  
**402,000** Turkish Land Forces (Army)  
**60,100** Turkish Navy  
**55,000** Turkish Air Forces

**20** Age young men are required to enlist in military service (for a 15-month term, subject to some exceptions)

*The Gendarmerie and Coast Guard come under Interior Ministry control in peacetime, but TGS command in wartime.*

**\$15.5 billion** 2011 Defense Budget  
*up approximately 8% from 2010*  
**1.9%** of gross domestic product (GDP)  
**7.4%** of total government budget  
**\$4.5 billion** procurement spending  
**\$505 million** research and development spending, 2009 (*up 46% from 2007*)

**\$2.3 billion** 2009 Annual Defense Industry Revenue (*more than double the 2002 figure*)  
**\$832 million** 2009 Annual Defense and Civil Aviation Exports (*more than six times the 2001 figure*)

**Equipment**

- The TSK has traditionally equipped itself with U.S. aircraft; German submarines; and other ships, armored vehicles, missiles, helicopters, and light arms from various indigenous and foreign sources.
- Israel had been a key supplier of drone aircraft and aircraft upgrade systems before the recent deterioration of Turkey-Israel ties.
- Turkey's procurement objectives called for 50% indigenous defense production by the end of 2010, and Foreign Trade Minister Zefer Caglayan claimed in August 2010 that indigenous production reached 46% in 2009.

**Modernization and reform plans**

- Greater readiness in confronting both conventional and asymmetric (weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, sabotage, and organized crime) threats
- Rapid deployability and sustainability in high- and low-intensity conflicts
- Greater "jointness" with international partners
- 20%-30% reduction in the army's size

### Key government bodies with purview over defense matters include

- **National Security Council (MGK)** Chaired by the President. Includes the Prime Minister, Chief of TGS, Minister of National Defense, Foreign Minister, Interior Minister, Justice Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, and the commanders of the Land Forces, Navy, Air Forces, and Gendarmerie.
- **Supreme Military Council (YAS)** Chaired by the Prime Minister. Includes the Chief of TGS, Minister of National Defense, the three TSK service commanders, and other commanders of four-star rank. Meets every August to discuss promotions and the general administration and regulation of the military. During the 2010 meetings, civilian leaders blocked or delayed the promotion of several officers suspected of past involvement in plots against the government. Reports also say that the YAS's traditional practice of expelling or disciplining officers with ideological (particularly Islamist) tendencies has become increasingly rare.
- **Defense Industry Executive Committee (SSIK)** Approves all military procurement decisions, and includes the Prime Minister, Chief of TGS, Minister of National Defense, and the head of the separate procurement agency known as the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM).<sup>b</sup> Since 2004, the SSM has been headed by the U.S.-educated Murad Bayar, who has spearheaded the movement to promote greater indigenous defense production.<sup>c</sup> However, Bayar and the SSM are advocating for a memorandum of understanding or "vision document" to guide future U.S.-Turkey defense industrial cooperation. A promotional office affiliated with the SSM opened near Washington, DC in 2010; according to Turkish daily Today's Zaman, similar offices are planned to open soon in Europe (Belgium), the Persian Gulf (Qatar), and the Caucasus and Central Asia (either Azerbaijan or Turkmenistan).

*The traditionally autonomous TSK is gradually coming under greater civilian control.*

**Sources:** TSK website at <http://www.tsk.tr/eng/index.htm>; Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Eastern Mediterranean, December 16, 2010; October 2010 American-Turkish Council annual conference at <http://www.the-atc.org/events/c10/presentations/Wednesday-Bfast-Lutfi-Varoglu.pdf>; Today's Zaman; Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review; Eurasia Daily Monitor.

- a. For a biography of General Kosaner, see NATO's website at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-40C23228-9940A075/natolive/who\\_is\\_who\\_65978.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-40C23228-9940A075/natolive/who_is_who_65978.htm).
- b. The SSM was established in 1985 pursuant to Turkish Law No. 3238. According to its website, it has a separate legal entity, and has broad authority (1) to carry out the SSIK's decisions and (2) to organize and coordinate research and development, planning, production, and export and offset strategy for the Turkish defense industry. The SSM also has complete control over the Defense Industry Support Fund, which is separate from the annual defense budget. The Fund receives direct "allotments from corporate taxes, fees and levies imposed on alcoholic and tobacco products, and all forms of lottery, betting and games of chance etc." See <http://www.ssm.gov.tr/home/institutional/Sayfalar/law3238.aspx>.
- c. A June 2009 *Defense News* profile of Bayar is available at <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4160708>.

## Major Areas of Defense Cooperation

U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation continues apace with respect to promoting stability and countering terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan. A U.S. defense presence in Turkey also continues—both through NATO and under the terms of a 1980 Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA)<sup>43</sup>—as do joint defense consultations, training, and military exercises. Finally, Turkey continues to seek advanced military equipment from the U.S. government and private sector (i.e., fighter aircraft, drone aircraft, helicopters, and missile defense systems), and its defense industry participates in joint ventures with the United States (e.g., on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter). However, Turkey's growing defense industry and its increased willingness to engage in arms import-export transactions or joint military exercises with non-NATO countries, such as China, Russia, Syria, Pakistan, and South Korea, indicate Turkey's interest in diversifying its defense relationships and decreasing its dependence on the United States, consistent with the more independent foreign policy the AKP government is pursuing. These and additional areas of cooperation are discussed below.

## NATO

### Turkey's Future Role

With the second-largest military in NATO (the United States has the largest), its geographic location at the southeastern flank of the alliance, and its status as a Muslim-majority country, Turkey plays a strategically important role in NATO. Having been in the alliance since 1952, the structure, personnel, and interoperability of its armed forces have been influenced over generations by its North American and European NATO partners. Turkey generally participates in NATO's expeditionary missions, including those in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and now Libya. As Turkey's defense spending remains robust while several European NATO member states reduce theirs, its relative weight within the alliance could grow over time. However, Turkey's current ability to devote its military manpower to NATO missions is somewhat compromised by ongoing commitments near its southeast border with Iraq, in the Aegean Sea region, and in northern Cyprus to protect the de facto republic for ethnic Turks there.

From Turkey's standpoint, its growing regional influence justifies greater Turkish involvement in setting and steering NATO's objectives and rules in a changing international environment.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> 32 U.S.T. 3323; TIAS 9901.

<sup>44</sup> See Saban Kardas, "Davutoglu Outlines the Contours of the New Turkish Foreign Policy," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, (continued...)

Turkey has shown assertiveness on many issues within the alliance in recent years, and this trend continued—if not intensified—during the March 2011 NATO deliberations over intervention in Libya.

In some aspects, Turkey perceives itself and is perceived as an anomaly within NATO, even if it remains firmly anchored in the alliance.<sup>45</sup> First, decades-long Turkish-Greek disputes over Cyprus (described above) and the Aegean Sea<sup>46</sup> have limited NATO's interoperability in the eastern Mediterranean and with the European Union (EU; of which Cyprus became a member in 2004). Additionally, the perception of Turkey as an outsider within NATO has been reinforced by the reluctance of at least some European countries to consider enforcing Turkey's Article 5 defense guarantees<sup>47</sup> during the run-up to the U.S.-led wars in Iraq in 1991 and 2003, and—perhaps even more fundamentally—to support Turkey's accession into the EU. In June 2010, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said,

I personally think that if there is anything to the notion that Turkey is, if you will, moving eastward, it is, in my view, in no small part because it was pushed, and pushed by some in Europe refusing to give Turkey the kind of organic link to the West that Turkey sought.

I think we have to think long and hard about why these developments in Turkey [occurred] and what we might be able to do to counter them.<sup>48</sup>

When differences over NATO priorities arise between Turkey and its allies, they generally exacerbate the tensions within the alliance that are linked with long-running perceptions about Turkey. With regard to Libya, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu voiced concern about the precedent that individual NATO member states acting without greater international consultation might set for future cases, even though the decision to intervene in Libya came after the passage of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 and Arab League approval-in-principle of a no-fly zone:

If a coalition will be formed, it must be coordinated by the UN. The UN Secretary General must convene a meeting. This is why the way the Paris meeting [between the United States, United Kingdom, and France] was held was contrary to international norms and customary

---

(...continued)

Vol. 8, No. 4, January 6, 2011, available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=37326](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37326).

<sup>45</sup> See, e.g., German Marshall Fund of the United States, *Transatlantic Trends: Key Findings 2009*, available at [http://trends.gmfus.org/doc/2009\\_English\\_Key.pdf](http://trends.gmfus.org/doc/2009_English_Key.pdf). This report summarized polling results that reflected differences in attitudes toward NATO and various security-related issues between Turks and citizens of other NATO countries. See also Umit Enginsoy, "Turkey still the outlier as world mulls no-fly zone over Libya," *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, March 1, 2011.

<sup>46</sup> The Turkish and Greek foreign ministries both provide information on the Aegean dispute, which centers on territorial issues over islands, waters, and airspace. See <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/background-note-on-aegean-dispute.en.mfa>; and <http://www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/South-Eastern+Europe/Turkey/>.

<sup>47</sup> Article 5 of The North Atlantic Treaty (NATO's founding and governing charter) reads: "The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area."

<sup>48</sup> "US Defence Secretary Gates blames EU for Turkey 'drift,'" *BBC News*, June 9, 2010.

practices. A group of countries cannot simply interpret a UN resolution in their own way and organize a military intervention in any country. If states that have formed a coalition among themselves are allowed to intervene against countries they target, that may lead to troubling situations in, say, the Middle East.<sup>49</sup>

Differences between Turkey and other NATO allies on intervention in Libya prompted one Western diplomat to say, “With its constant favoritism of fellow Muslim regimes in the Middle East, Turkey looks like a non-member NATO member—officially in but practically outside the alliance.”<sup>50</sup> Such observations could reflect the difficulty some NATO countries might have in discerning to what extent Turkish policies are driven by possible cultural or ideological affinities, and to what extent they are driven by Turkey’s desire to minimize the problems it faces given its geographical closeness—unique within NATO—to many ongoing areas of instability and conflict. Additionally, given the multiplicity of long-running disagreements within NATO that recur along regional, cultural, and other lines, it is possible that characterizations of Turkey as a NATO outlier or outsider might be overstated.

## **Missile Defense**

As discussed above, Turkey and its NATO allies approved ballistic missile defense (BMD) for territories and populations as an alliance-wide mission at the November 2010 Lisbon summit. In exchange for its approval, Turkey reportedly insisted on the following two conditions:

1. No country (such as Iran or Syria) be named as a threat or a target for the ballistic missile defense system.
2. Turkey’s territory would be entirely protected by the system.<sup>51</sup>

Discussions are apparently continuing between the United States and Turkey on the possibility of Turkey hosting a transportable U.S. radar,<sup>52</sup> as part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) that is planned to be part of a NATO BMD system and has been welcomed by NATO member states. Ian Lesser of the German Marshall Fund of the United States wrote, shortly after the Lisbon summit, that EPAA Standard Missile-3 interceptors (also known as the “Aegis” system) supported by a radar based in Turkey “would be based at sea, and eventually in Romania and Poland. All of this will be accompanied by new national air defense investments, including systems Turkey already plans to acquire.”<sup>53</sup> For additional information on Turkey’s possible acquisition of missile defense systems, see “Missile Defense Systems” below.

Turkey might decide that hosting a U.S. radar as part of an EPAA BMD system under the NATO umbrella would not be unduly provocative to countries such as Iran because the system is not designed for first-strike use and because Turkey has been considering missile defense options on

---

<sup>49</sup> Ardan Zenturk, “They Brought Disarray to Libya; We Are Tidying Up,” *Star Online* (Istanbul) (translated from Turkish), March 24, 2011, Open Source Document GMP20110324016020.

<sup>50</sup> Umit Enginsoy and Burak Ege Bekdil, “Libya Crisis Widens Turk-West Differences,” *Defense News*, March 21, 2011.

<sup>51</sup> Sevil Kucukkosum, “Missile diplomacy latest test for US-NATO-Turk ties,” *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, October 21, 2010.

<sup>52</sup> Champion, op. cit.

<sup>53</sup> Ian O. Lesser, “Turkey, the NATO Summit, and After,” German Marshall Fund of the United States “On Turkey” Analysis, November 23, 2010, available at [http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct\\_publication\\_attachments/Lesser\\_NATO\\_Nov10.pdf](http://www.gmfus.org/galleries/ct_publication_attachments/Lesser_NATO_Nov10.pdf);jsessionid=aux1Dml-YRNcrd6jJZ.



its own and with the United States since at least 2001.<sup>54</sup> Hosting the radar could be justified domestically as cost effective and NATO-interoperable, particularly if Turkey can argue to its citizens that doing so will deliver tangible security benefits to them. On the other hand, Turkey, though it opposes the idea of Iranian nuclear weapons, has thus far publicly presumed that Iran's nuclear program is intended for purely peaceful, civilian means. If it believes that agreeing to host a U.S. radar as part of a NATO BMD system would lead Iran to perceive that Turkey's presumption about its nuclear program has changed, Turkey may be reluctant to risk a possible provocation. Turkey's active diplomatic role on the Iranian nuclear issue could have implications for the various actors' threat perceptions as well. It is unclear what connection Turkey sees between the arsenal of Turkey-based U.S. tactical nuclear weapons established under the NATO umbrella, if reports about the arsenal's existence are accurate (see "Bases and Transport Corridors" below),<sup>55</sup> and the political, strategic, or operational value of possible BMD elements in Turkey.<sup>56</sup> In the event Turkey does not host the proposed radar, the *Washington Post* has reported that Bulgaria might be asked to host it.<sup>57</sup>

Assuming Turkey accepts deployment of the radar on its territory in principle, it may still need to negotiate and implement the details of the arrangement with the United States. Assuming also that the EPAA is eventually implemented as part of a NATO BMD system, contingency planning for defense against missile attacks under various scenarios may generate differences of opinion between Turkey, the United States, and other allies about the proper NATO response.<sup>58</sup>

## **Afghanistan**

Turkey has twice commanded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and has had troops participating in ISAF since shortly after its inception in December 2001. Turkey's approximately 2,000 troops concentrate on training Afghan military and security forces and providing security in Kabul, where Turkey commands ISAF's Regional Command-Capital, as well as in Wardak (just west of Kabul) and Jawzjan (in northern Afghanistan) provinces. According to the Turkish government,

---

<sup>54</sup> See, e.g., U.S.-Turkey memorandum of understanding for a bilateral missile defense architecture analysis, June 6, 2001, available at [http://turkey.usembassy.gov/treaty\\_pdf/ctia10089.pdf](http://turkey.usembassy.gov/treaty_pdf/ctia10089.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> See footnote 70.

<sup>56</sup> A March/April 2011 article in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* stated that Turkey sees tactical nuclear weapons based on its territory as "playing an important security role, providing reassurance of American assistance in the event of an emergency and a 'hook' tethering Turkey to the European mainland. The nuclear weapons also appear to perform a nonproliferation function: As long as Turkey has access to US nuclear weapons it can turn to in extremis, there is no need for Ankara to consider developing its own nuclear weapons option." Mark Fitzpatrick, "How Europeans view tactical nuclear weapons on their continent," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 67, no. 2, March/April 2011. Nevertheless, in light of advocacy begun in 2010 by Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, (three of the four other states where U.S. tactical nuclear weapons are reportedly stationed under NATO auspices—Italy is the fourth), Norway, and Luxembourg for the removal of the approximately 150-200 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons from European territory, and in light of prospects within the next year for U.S.-Russia negotiations on curtailing tactical nuclear weapons in Europe (Russia reportedly has approximately 2,000), some analysts doubt that Turkey would contest the weapons' removal from its territory. Turkish analyst and former diplomat Sinan Ulgen has noted that "The question of denuclearization has not been politicized in Turkey." Rachel Oswald, "Polish, Turkish Experts Open to U.S. Withdrawing Nukes from Europe," *Global Security Newswire*, March 31, 2011.

<sup>57</sup> Craig Whitlock, "NATO near adoption of US missile shield," *Washington Post*, October 15, 2010.

<sup>58</sup> See Lesser, op cit.

- Turkey has made available its Konya Air Base and other airports for the deployment of [Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS)] aircraft and allies' cargo aircraft in support of ISAF operations;
- Turkey has deployed five Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLT) and has also conducted in-place training of 8,000 Afghan National Army (ANA) members and training in Turkey for an additional 1,000 ANA members; and
- Turkey established two civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Wardak and Jawzjan, and opened a branch of the Turkish International Cooperation Agency in Kabul, from which it runs a number of humanitarian assistance and economic development projects.<sup>59</sup>

As with several other NATO and non-NATO contributors to ISAF, Turkey's troops are not involved in combat. Turkey's history of good relations with both Afghanistan and Pakistan and its status as the Muslim-majority country with the greatest level of involvement in ISAF is thought by some analysts to help legitimize ISAF's presence. It is unclear how Turkey's participation in the expeditionary mission to Afghanistan might translate into possible benefits for the United States and its other NATO allies in leveraging Turkey's possible cultural or ideological affinities for other potential defense cooperation contexts involving Muslim-majority countries located closer to Turkey's borders.<sup>60</sup>

## **Iraq**

### **Pursuing Stability and Countering Iranian Influence**

U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation in Iraq takes place within a larger context of questions about Iraq's future stability, political makeup, and regional profile. The United States plans to withdraw its troops by the end of 2011 and transition its military mission to Iraq under DOD auspices to a training and security assistance mission under State Department auspices. As it has begun to do so, Turkey has become more engaged politically and economically throughout the country, not only its traditional sphere of interest in the north.<sup>61</sup> It has contributed a modest contingent of personnel to the NATO Training Mission-Iraq since 2005 and has sponsored specialized training for hundreds of Iraqi security personnel at its NATO Partnership for Peace Training Center in Ankara.<sup>62</sup> Many analysts wonder whether the U.S. drawdown will compel Turkey to adopt a more vigorous approach backed by military strength with regard to countering Iranian influence and promoting stability.

---

<sup>59</sup> Information dated January 2011 provided to CRS by Turkish Embassy in Washington, DC.

<sup>60</sup> For further discussion of this question, see "Turkey's Importance to U.S. National Security" above.

<sup>61</sup> Anthony Shadid, "Resurgent Turkey Flexes Its Muscles Around Iraq," *New York Times*, January 4, 2011.

<sup>62</sup> Transcript of speech by U.S. Lt. Gen. Michael D. Barbero, Commander of NATO Training Mission-Iraq, Ankara, Turkey, October 2010, available at <http://www.aco.nato.int/page12822541.aspx>.



## Neutralizing the PKK?

### *Background*

As mentioned above, Turkey—whose population is approximately 20% Kurdish—has struggled for nearly three decades with the PKK, a Kurdish separatist militant group and U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization that has implemented several attacks within Turkey since the mid-1980s. PKK attacks mushroomed and Kurdish secessionist sentiment within Turkey caused concerns in the 1990s following the establishment of an autonomous Kurdish zone in northern Iraq at the end of the 1991 Gulf War. Reported U.S. collaboration with Turkey helped it capture PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in 1999, and the PKK declared a cease-fire shortly afterwards. After the 2003 Iraq war further strengthened Kurdish autonomy in Iraq, however, the PKK resumed operations against Turkish targets, using safe havens in northern Iraq. PKK leadership has spoken of changing the organization's ultimate goal to "autonomy" rather than outright secession. Turkish perceptions of U.S. culpability for the PKK threat were reinforced by U.S. and Iraqi efforts preventing Turkey from stationing troops in northern Iraq (after the United States originally suggested the stationing of Turkish troops, then reversed course following Iraqi protestations) during and after the 2003 war to monitor developments, control refugee flows, and protect Turkoman minorities (especially in Mosul and Kirkuk).

According to the State Department's Country Reports on Terrorism for 2009, the PKK maintains a regular fighting force of approximately 4,000-5,000 militants. Of those, 3,000-3,500, including the organization's military leadership, are thought to be concentrated in the Qandil mountains of northern Iraq. The PKK has a branch dedicated to attacks on military targets in southeastern Turkey, and a branch dedicated to attacks (primarily bombings) in urban, primarily tourist areas in western Turkey.<sup>63</sup> Estimates of casualties from Turkey-PKK violence since 1984 range from 32,000 to 45,000 (including armed combatants and civilians on both sides),<sup>64</sup> the majority of whom were killed during the 1990s. Hundreds of thousands of Kurdish villagers in southeastern Turkey have been displaced as a result of the violence, and Kurdish human rights grievances persist.<sup>65</sup>

Turkey once viewed the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in northern Iraq as a primary PKK enabler. Increasingly, however, KRG officials welcome the stability they view Turkish investment as bringing to the region and have become tolerant of Turkish efforts to counter the PKK, though they claim that they are militarily incapable and politically constrained from actively halting or disrupting PKK operations themselves. Syria, which used to provide safe haven to the PKK, stopped doing so in 1999 after its expulsion of Abdullah Ocalan. Iran

---

<sup>63</sup> U.S. State Department, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2009*, Chapter 6. Terrorist Organizations, August 2010, available at <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/2009/140900.htm>.

<sup>64</sup> Project Ploughshares, *Armed Conflicts Report 2010*, Turkey, available at <http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/ACRText/ACR-Turkey2.htm>. Between 2,300 and 2,500 are estimated to have been killed since 2003. A *Los Angeles Times* blog estimated that of the casualties since the beginning of the conflict, some 5,000 Turks and some 35,000 Kurds have died. Becky Lee Katz, "TURKEY: Kurdish teenager convicted as terrorist for attending demonstration," *latimes.com*, July 19, 2010.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. State Department, *2009 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, Turkey, March 11, 2010, available at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eur/136062.htm>.

occasionally cooperates with Turkey against the PKK because of problems with its own Kurdish minority.<sup>66</sup>

### ***U.S. Support of Turkish Efforts***

After two major PKK cross-border ambushes in southeastern Turkey killed 25, injured 20, and captured 8 Turkish soldiers in October 2007, Turkey amassed approximately 100,000 troops on its border with Iraq.<sup>67</sup> To persuade the Turks not to undertake a full-scale cross-border invasion, which could have imperiled U.S. supply lines to Iraq from Turkey and overall regional stability, the Bush Administration reportedly agreed to close counterterrorism cooperation involving real-time intelligence sharing on the location and movement of PKK operatives. As reported by the *Washington Post* in December 2007,

U.S. military personnel have set up a center for sharing intelligence in Ankara, the Turkish capital, providing imagery and other immediate information gathered from U.S. aircraft and unmanned drones flying over the separatists' mountain redoubts, the officials said. A senior administration official said the goal of the U.S. program is to identify the movements and activities of the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), which is fighting to create an autonomous enclave in Turkey.

The United States is "essentially handing them their targets," one U.S. military official said. The Turkish military then decides whether to act on the information and notifies the United States, the official said.<sup>68</sup>

*Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment* reported that, starting in December 2007, "The US assisted with the co-ordination of the air strikes by allowing the aircraft into Iraqi airspace. The air strikes were supported by ground-based artillery fired from within Turkey." Other than a brief incursion in February 2008 and other minor raids, regular Turkish ground forces have not crossed the border. *Jane's* said that Turkish officials told it that the air strikes are insufficient to stop the PKK's operations, but do help "in intimidating the PKK and discouraging infiltration into Turkey."<sup>69</sup> Thus, future Turkish ground operations remain a possibility, depending on factors such as

- Iraqi national government and KRG approval and support, and
- the effectiveness of non-military (i.e., political and socioeconomic) approaches to ameliorating tensions involving Turkey's Kurds.

The United States has encouraged Turkey-Iraq-KRG coordination on these matters. This coordination is likely to become a more significant factor as the United States draws down its own presence. U.S. officials, both civilian and military, also routinely emphasize the ultimate importance of non-military means, which the AKP government has tried to a limited extent in considering a variety of measures for Kurds, such as greater local governance, linguistic rights,

---

<sup>66</sup> *Country Reports on Terrorism 2009*, op. cit.

<sup>67</sup> This had followed previous situations in 2006 and 2007 in which Turkey made similar mobilizations in the border area and the Bush Administration appointed retired General Joseph Ralston, former Supreme Allied Commander Europe, as U.S. Special Envoy for Countering the PKK. Ralston served in this position until October 2007.

<sup>68</sup> Ann Scott Tyson and Robin Wright, "U.S. Helps Turkey Hit Rebel Kurds in Iraq," *Washington Post*, December 18, 2007.

<sup>69</sup> "Armed Forces, Turkey," op. cit.

and cultural rights. The so-called “Kurdish opening” or “democratic initiative” stalled in 2009 in the face of criticism from opposition parties as well as the closure (or dissolution) of the predominantly Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) by Turkey’s Constitutional Court. The DTP’s place in Turkish politics has since been taken by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). Renewed PKK attacks in the spring and summer of 2010 killed approximately 100 Turkish security force and military personnel, drawing frequent cross-border retaliatory air and artillery strikes from U.S.-aided Turkish forces. Although it remains unclear, one of the PKK’s offshoots may have been culpable in an October 2010 suicide bombing in Istanbul’s main Taksim Square that injured 32 people.

Because this is the high-profile national security issue with which the Turkish military is most operationally involved, many analysts view the prestige of the Turkish military as increasingly bound up with ending PKK attacks. The centrality of the issue, along with the Turkish perception of the United States as responsible for the problem and uniquely positioned to help counter it, makes it the focus of Turkey’s most urgent defense cooperation requests. The shrinking timeline for U.S. military operations in Iraq has possibly heightened this sense of urgency among Turks who believe that U.S.-Turkey counterterrorism cooperation may be affected by the reduced U.S. footprint and thus seek an effective alternative.

## Bases and Transport Corridors

Under the U.S.-Turkey Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement, the United States maintains access to a few Turkish installations for its military use. It stations over 1,700 U.S. military personnel in Turkey, and employs approximately 5,500 total personnel, counting local workers. The largest U.S. presence is at Incirlik air base in southern Turkey near the city of Adana, with approximately 1,500 U.S. personnel (5,000 total, including Turkish contractors). According to *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Incirlik also is the reported home of vaults holding approximately 60-70 U.S. tactical, aircraft-deliverable B61 nuclear gravity bombs under NATO auspices.<sup>70</sup> Since the end of the Cold War, Incirlik has been used to support U.S. and NATO operations in Iraq, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

The Air Force (39<sup>th</sup> Air Base Wing) uses Incirlik to provide non-lethal cargo to U.S. military missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to information provided by ODC-Ankara in October 2010, the United States sends 68% of air logistical support for Iraq and Afghanistan through Incirlik, with C-17 aircraft flying an average of 2,000 sorties per year and KC-135 refueling aircraft an average of 1,460. U.S. European Command estimates that its use of Incirlik and its overflight of Turkish airspace saves approximately \$210 million per year in alternate route costs. However, Turkey maintains the right to cancel U.S. access to Incirlik with three days' notice.

### Incirlik Air Base

Incirlik (pronounced in-JUR-lick) air base is an enduring symbol of U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation. Constructed in the 1950s by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in southern Turkey outside the major city of Adana (now Turkey's fifth-largest city, with a population of 1.6 million), Incirlik's two runways eventually became a key hub for U.S. and NATO training and reconnaissance missions during the Cold War. The Turkish air force took possession of Incirlik at the outset of the 1975-1978 U.S. arms embargo, but NATO operations continued. U.S. operations resumed after the embargo, with the base under overall Turkish control. Since the end of the Cold War, Incirlik has been used most notably by the U.S. Air Force and other NATO allies for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although bases in the Persian Gulf and Central Asia have lightened Incirlik's U.S. traffic, supply and refueling operations continue, and, as discussed in the report, Incirlik is the reported location of the U.S. tactical nuclear weapons arsenal in Turkey under NATO auspices.

As the U.S. military presence in Turkey has decreased from its peak of some 25,000 personnel in the late 1960s, and has been completely vacated from several installations, many veterans and U.S. officials familiar with the legacy of U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation view Incirlik as the legacy's continuing bellwether.

The United States has relied heavily on the Habur Gate, the only available land border crossing into northern Iraq, for the transport of fuel, subsistence, and construction materials to support U.S. military operations, but future needs are less clear with those operations drawing down. According to ODC-Ankara, the Mediterranean port of Mersin in southern Turkey is becoming an increasingly important point for the military to transport containerized cargo along the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) route from Turkey to Georgia and through the Caucasus and Central Asia to Afghanistan. As the United States draws down in Iraq, it uses the Habur Gate to "retrograde" non-lethal cargo and further transport it to Afghanistan along the NDN. The other

<sup>70</sup> Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe, 2011," *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, vol. 67, no. 1, January/February 2011. Reportedly, the U.S. has approximately 150-200 B61 bombs in Turkey, Belgium, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands left over from their deployment during the Cold War. This amount is a very small fraction of the over 7,000 U.S. tactical nuclear weapons stationed in Europe during the 1970s. Ibid.

U.S. military transportation corridor from Iraq to Afghanistan uses Kuwait, the Persian Gulf, and Pakistan to bypass Iran.

The U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC-Ankara), with approximately 30 U.S. personnel (100 total), is located in Ankara. Ankara is also home to two NATO training centers: the Partnership for Peace Training Center<sup>71</sup> and the Center of Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism.<sup>72</sup> Approximately 170 U.S. personnel (290 total) are located in the western Turkish city of Izmir to support NATO's Allied Air Component Command, the designated command center for the aerial mission in Libya for Operation Unified Protector (see "On Libya and NATO's Role" above). A contingent of approximately 17 U.S. personnel mans two air postal squadrons and a tactical management office in Istanbul. One of six NATO Rapid Deployable Corps is headquartered near Istanbul; the others are located in France, Germany (two), Italy, and Spain.

For locations of the U.S. and NATO presence in Turkey, see **Figure 1** above.

## Possible U.S. Policy Approaches

Congress and other U.S. policymakers may choose from a range of possible approaches to action on and oversight of U.S. defense cooperation with Turkey. In considering options, Members of Congress could engage in formal and informal oversight and information-gathering through committee hearings and consultations with key actors within the executive branch, the Turkish government and defense establishment, and non-governmental and international organizations, including the NATO Parliamentary Assembly. Four possible approaches are described below, in no particular order of priority.

**Status Quo Approach:** *Would not focus significantly on recent developments, but rather emphasize and express confidence that existing NATO and bilateral relationships—with their long legacies—can address mutual security challenges, even in an evolving regional and global context.*

Those favoring this approach might argue that recent changes within and outside of Turkey should not change the overall parameters of the alliance. These advocates might present a historical view arguing that U.S.-Turkey defense relations, even during the Cold War, have experienced ups and downs, but that each side ultimately concludes that it needs the other and therefore a permanent rupture is unlikely in the future.

This approach would not advocate conditioning U.S. cooperation with Turkey on specific actions or relations with third-party countries. It would not acknowledge either a need to revisit institutional structures or decision-making processes, or the possibility that Turkish foreign policy

---

<sup>71</sup> The Partnership for Peace Training Center (<http://www.bioem.tsk.tr/>) offers defense and security-related education and training opportunities for representatives from countries that are members of NATO or NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP), Mediterranean Dialogue (MD), or Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI). Information on the PfP, MD, and ICI and participating countries can be found at [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_50349.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_50349.htm) and [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_59419.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_59419.htm).

<sup>72</sup> NATO's Center for Excellence-Defense Against Terrorism (<http://www.coedat.nato.int/>) offers a wide range of counterterrorism-related education and training opportunities. 27 NATO countries have participated, along with 77 other countries.

stances in opposition to the United States could lead to a more mature and productive bilateral relationship in the long run.

Critics of a status quo approach, however, could argue that recent challenges to the U.S.-Turkey alliance are fundamentally different than past ones, and that a static view of the bilateral and NATO alliances in light of regional and global changes risks ceding initiative to other actors and leaving the United States unprepared for the potential consequences. Omer Taspinar, longtime analyst of U.S.-Turkey relations at the Brookings Institution, wrote in early 2011 of the possible risks if U.S. officials and analysts pay insufficient attention to changes in the alliance's dynamics:

As France did under Charles de Gaulle in the 1960s, Turkey may opt for its own ... "Realpolitik" with countries such as China, India, and Russia. It could even contemplate leaving, as France under de Gaulle did, the military structure of NATO, while maintaining its political membership in the organization.<sup>73</sup>

***Accommodative Approach:*** *Accord high priority to the U.S.-Turkey alliance and revise expectations for it by accommodating Turkey's expressions of its national interests—and U.S. perceptions of these interests—given recent developments within Turkey, the region, and globally.*<sup>74</sup>

By maintaining that the alliance is based broadly on shared values and interests such as long-term regional stability, rather than on any particular issue, Congress might acknowledge its dedication to cooperation even in the event Turkey opposes U.S. policies in certain cases.<sup>75</sup> Responsiveness to Turkish requests for arms to counter the PKK, Turkish conditions on hosting missile defense system elements, and Turkish desires to have a greater role in multilateral institutional structures and decision-making processes that address regional order would be possible despite ongoing Turkish disputes with Israel and Armenia, and despite Turkish relations with actors such as Iran, China, Syria, and Hamas. Under this approach Congress could still voice criticism of Turkey on issues affecting U.S. interests, but might generally avoid characterizing any such issue as a litmus test for the alliance.

Those supporting this approach might argue that Turkey is more likely to serve U.S. and NATO interests as an "independent" and "credible" regional actor than as an actor perceived as following Western dictates. Some analysts have argued that strong U.S. relations with democratically elected Turkish leaders is the best (or least-worst) option for forwarding regional U.S. interests and countering Iranian influence in places such as Iraq, regardless of U.S.-Turkey divergences on some issues.<sup>76</sup> A counterargument is that this approach would establish a bad precedent by ceding judgment to Turkey to determine whether an action or policy that appears to run contrary to U.S. interests (such as on Iran or Israel) is justified, and that it also constitutes tacit U.S. acceptance and even de facto sponsorship of Turkey's efforts to diversify its military contacts and import-export relationships with other countries, including China. In the absence of

---

<sup>73</sup> Taspinar, op. cit.

<sup>74</sup> See, e.g., Scott A. Field and Dariush Zahedi, "The U.S. Security Strategy and the Role of Turkey in the New Middle East," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 3, December 2010, available at <http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/71-82.pdf>.

<sup>75</sup> For an argument that appears to support this position, see Robert Wexler, "United States and Turkey: Allies at Odds?," *Insight Turkey*, vol. 13, no. 1, winter 2011. Wexler is a former Member of Congress.

<sup>76</sup> Field and Zahedi, op. cit.

specifically prescribed limits to toleration of Turkish divergence from U.S. stances on key issues, this approach could be seen as an imprudent overcorrection.

***Linkage Approach:*** *Link cooperation to some extent to Turkey's relations with certain third-party countries or non-state actors—including Iran, Israel, Hamas, Armenia, and China—or to Turkish actions on issues of U.S. national security interest.*<sup>77</sup>

Clear parameters for cooperation will arguably allow Turkey to demonstrate the importance it attaches to cooperation with the United States, depending on how closely it aligns its actions with U.S. interests. Recent U.S. differences with Turkey on the Iranian nuclear issue and other issues may have been caused or exacerbated by mutual misperceptions.<sup>78</sup> However, avoiding miscommunication might be difficult in any event given multiple congressional views that potentially conflict with each other and with Administration views on what parameters to set and how to set them.

On the other hand, this approach might lead Turkey to adopt the view that third-party countries or priority issues are more important to the United States than its alliance with Turkey. Firm congressional redlines or ultimatums could risk the relationship's future, particularly if Turkey chooses to challenge them, while giving ground on them could endanger U.S. credibility.

***Case-by-Case Approach:*** *Use or combine any of the other three approaches on a case-by-case basis.*

Approach(es) to U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation matters could hinge on a number of factors, including the following:

- U.S.-Turkish agreement on how to address regional security challenges;
- Turkey's relations with key third-party countries and non-state actors, including Iran, Israel, Hamas, Armenia, China, Cyprus, and Greece;
- Turkey's perceived importance to U.S. interests given regional and global developments and trends, as well as possible alternate locations for military basing and transport corridors;
- the level of U.S. trust in Turkish leaders (civilian and military) and in internal Turkish stability; and
- the likelihood of influencing Turkey to act in U.S. interests and of strengthening the overall bilateral and NATO relationships.

Using a case-by-case approach, however, risks that Turkey and outside observers will characterize congressional action and oversight as inconsistent and unpredictable. It may have the advantage, however, of being responsive to changing developments in a region of the world that is of critical importance to U.S. national security.

---

<sup>77</sup> See, e.g., Ariel Cohen, "Washington Concerned as Turkey Leaving the West," *Turkish Policy Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 3, December 2010, available at <http://www.turkishpolicy.com/dosyalar/files/25-35%281%29.pdf>; Sally McNamara, Ariel Cohen, and James Phillips, "Countering Turkey's Strategic Drift," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 2442, July 26, 2010, available at <http://report.heritage.org/bg2442>.

<sup>78</sup> See, e.g., Joshua Keating, "Turkey: Obama wanted us to make a deal with Iran," *foreignpolicy.com*, May 19, 2010.

## **Specific Issues and Possible Options for Congress**

### **Access to Turkish Bases and Transport Corridors**

The prospect of temporary or permanent denial of U.S. military access to Turkish bases and transport corridors concerns Congress and other policymakers. A loss of U.S. access to Incirlik air base and the closure of the Habur Gate and Mersin port could cause delays and increase costs for the transport of cargo to Afghanistan through alternate routes (see “Bases and Transport Corridors” above). Short-term costs and delays may be of less concern than the longer-term question of how a potential lack of access to Incirlik, other bases, and Turkish transport corridors could affect options for future U.S./NATO military action in the region, particularly if regional and global developments prevent or limit the United States from using alternate sites in the Persian Gulf, the Caucasus, Central Asia, or South Asia to stage operations or establish supply lines. Members of Congress might inquire whether additional alternatives to Turkish bases or transport corridors—within other NATO countries or elsewhere—might exist or be developed for use in the surrounding region.

### **Reaction to Downturn in Turkey-Israel Relations**

A drop-off in Turkish military cooperation with Israel has taken place in parallel with a general deterioration of Turkey-Israel relations since 2009. This downturn can be attributed to a number of factors, including the May 2010 *Mavi Marmara* flotilla incident (mentioned above) and Turkish-Israeli differences over Israel’s invasion of Hamas-controlled Gaza in December 2008. It also parallels the military’s declining role in Turkish society, and the greater empowerment of Prime Minister Erdogan and other AKP and national leaders who seem increasingly to believe that criticizing many of Israel’s policies is both merited and domestically popular.

The souring of Turkey-Israel relations has the potential to affect U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation given that the United States maintains close alliances with both Turkey and Israel (which is not a member of NATO), and has counted on previously close Turkey-Israel military relations to cultivate U.S.-Turkey-Israel military cooperation. Although Israel did complete the delivery to Turkey of already-purchased Heron drone aircraft after the flotilla incident, Turkey has ceased its participation in joint exercises with Israel, and new arms sales and defense industrial cooperation are on hold indefinitely pending the resolution of post-flotilla grievances. So far, neither country has pursued a resolution to the other’s satisfaction. The air exercise Anatolian Eagle and the naval exercise Reliant Mermaid, both of which had featured U.S.-Turkey-Israel cooperation in previous years, did not feature either the United States or Israel in late 2010. Anatolian Eagle took place with different participants, and Reliant Mermaid was canceled.

It also is unclear to what extent divergent Turkish and Israeli positions on regional issues involving Iran, the Palestinians, and other actors could lead to a further breach between the two and, by reason of U.S.-Israeli closeness, to further strains on U.S.-Turkey defense relations. For example, Turkey has reportedly set as one condition for its willingness to host a U.S. radar sensors as part of a ballistic missile defense system that information from the radar not be shared with Israel (which hosts a separate U.S. missile defense radar system).

Following the May 2010 flotilla incident, the Senate passed S.Res. 548 by voice vote on June 24, 2010. The resolution condemned the attack by the “extremists aboard the *Mavi Marmara*,”



invoked Israel's right to self-defense, and encouraged "the Government of Turkey to recognize the importance of continued strong relations with Israel and the necessity of closely scrutinizing organizations with potential ties to terrorist groups."<sup>79</sup> A January 2011 *New York Times Magazine* article quotes Selim Yenel, a Turkish Foreign Ministry deputy undersecretary responsible for U.S. relations, as saying, "We're getting a lot of flak from the Hill. We used to get hit by the Greek lobby and the Armenian lobby, but we were protected by the Jewish lobby. Now the Jewish lobby is coming after us as well."<sup>80</sup>

In the near term, an improvement in relations between the AKP government and the Israeli government of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu does not appear likely. It is debatable whether an active U.S. brokering role will improve or worsen prospects for Turkey-Israel rapprochement and for future U.S. defense relations with both countries. Developments on this issue could have implications for how much future influence the United States has on regional security.

## **Missile Defense Radar and NATO**

Construction and deployment of the various elements of the U.S. European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to ballistic missile defense in Europe, including a possible radar in Turkey, is subject to congressional appropriations and oversight.<sup>81</sup> The Joint Explanatory Statement of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees (the practical equivalent of a conference report) on the FY2011 Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-383) enacted on January 7, 2011,<sup>82</sup> contains the following:

- A provision conditioning the use of funds for construction and deployment of land-based interceptors of the EPAA on prior approval by the host nation(s) of the required basing and deployment agreements. This condition, however, is subject to waiver by the Secretary of Defense for national security reasons. Furthermore, the provision states that it is not intended to impede or delay the successful implementation of the EPAA, nor is it intended to limit the production of missile defense interceptors for ground- and flight-testing, or production validation.
- A provision that limits funds for construction and deployment of the land-based portion of the EPAA until after Congress receives an independent assessment of the operational and cost effectiveness of the EPAA as required by the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (P.L. 111-84).

In addition to being responsible for the costs of land- and sea-based EPAA deployment, which NATO welcomed at its November 2010 Lisbon Summit as a U.S. contribution to its territorial

---

<sup>79</sup> In the House, Representative Dina Titus sponsored H.Res. 1599, which was not passed but garnered 23 co-sponsors. H.Res. 1599 would have called upon the Secretary of State to investigate the "role of any foreign governments, including the Republic of Turkey, which may have aided and abetted the organizers of the recent Gaza Flotilla mission to breach Israeli coastal security and assault the naval defense forces of the State of Israel."

<sup>80</sup> James Traub, "Turkey's Rules," *New York Times Magazine*, January 20, 2011.

<sup>81</sup> For more information, see CRS Report R41549, *Missile Defense and NATO's Lisbon Summit*, by Steven A. Hildreth and Carl Ek.

<sup>82</sup> The joint explanatory statement is available at <http://armed-services.senate.gov/Special%20Interest%20Item/FINAL%20MASTER%20CONFERENCE%202010.pdf>.

BMD system while awaiting operational integration, the United States is to be equally responsible with the other 27 NATO member states—through the common NATO budget—for the general costs of the BMD system. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has estimated these costs to be €200 million (about \$260 million) over 10 years.<sup>83</sup>

The Administration's initial timeline for the EPAA calls for the radar to be deployed by the end of 2011. Congress, NATO allies, and other international actors could determine that it is important to ensure that the Administration meets its stated objective. The extent to which this will translate into time pressure on Turkey to decide on hosting the radar and conclude the necessary basing and deployment agreements with the United States is unclear. In addition to Turkish leaders' concerns about the EPAA's practical capabilities in defending their territory and people, other reservations reportedly "center on being included in the decision process for the system and sharing in its technological expertise."<sup>84</sup>

## **Arms Sales and Industrial Cooperation**

Turkey no longer receives annual Foreign Military Financing aid for purchasing U.S.-produced equipment. Yet, partly due to the historical legacy established by its past reliance on U.S. assistance, and partly due to continued U.S. preeminence in advanced military technology, Turkey still considers the United States to be a preferred supplier of aircraft, helicopters, electronic warfare systems, and advanced missile systems through foreign military sales (FMS) or from U.S. defense contractors through direct commercial sales (DCS).

However, Turkey's desire to limit its dependence on any one nation or group of nations has led to procurement and industrial cooperation policies that have come into tension with U.S. practices regarding co-production and technology sharing. As a result, Turkey increasingly solicits competitive offers from multiple countries for its defense acquisitions. It seriously considers offers from non-U.S. suppliers that may not be as technologically advanced or reliable, but that Turkey perceives as being more flexible in negotiations and in sharing expertise, and therefore more helpful in contributing to Turkey's long-term goal of industrial self-reliance. Other countries that Turkey considers as possible sources of procurement and/or partners in co-development include NATO countries such as Germany and Italy, plus others such as South Korea, Russia, China, Pakistan, Indonesia, Singapore, and South Africa.

See **Appendix B** for more detailed information on Turkey's procurement and defense industry policies.

---

<sup>83</sup> Anders Fogh Rasmussen, "NATO Needs a Missile Defense," *New York Times*, October 12, 2010. However, in December 2010, a NATO-mandated industry advisory group reportedly concluded in an internal study that the cost could far exceed the early estimate. *Inside the Army* quoted the group's report as stating that "[w]hile NATO publicly envisages relatively benign cost for currently assumed territorial missile defence functionalities as add-on to the [existing theater-level missile defense] programme, it is obvious that a new, open [command-and-control] architecture approach will require a significant investment by NATO." "NATO Industry Report Says Missile Shield Cost Would Be 'Significant,'" *Inside the Army*, December 6, 2010.

<sup>84</sup> Kucukkösüm, "Missile diplomacy latest test for US-NATO-Turk ties," op. cit.

**Table 2. Significant U.S.-Origin Arms Transfers or Expected Arms Transfers to Turkey**  
(congressional notifications since 2006)

Amount/Description	FMS or DCS	Year			Primary Contractor(s)	Estimated Cost
		Cong. Notice	Contract	Delivery		
100 F-35A Joint Strike Fighter aircraft (possibly 16 more discussed following congressional notice)	DCS	2006		2014-2023 (Expected if contract signed)	Lockheed Martin	\$11-\$15 billion
30 F-16C Block 50 Fighter aircraft and associated equipment	FMS	2006	2009	By 2013 (Expected)	Consortium (Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, and others)	\$1.8 billion
48 AGM-84H SLAM-ER Air-surface missiles	FMS	2006	2006	Complete	Boeing	\$162 million
105 AIM-9X SIDEWINDER Air-air missiles (SRAAM)	FMS	2007			Raytheon	\$71 million
51 Block II Tactical HARPOON Anti-ship missiles	FMS	2007	2008 (for at least 4)		McDonnell Douglas (Boeing)	\$159 million
100 MK-54 MAKO Torpedoes	FMS	2007	2009	By 2012 (Expected)	Raytheon	\$105 million
30 AAQ-33 SNIPER and AN/AAQ-13 LANTIRN Aircraft electro-optical systems (targeting and navigation pods)	FMS	2008	2009		Lockheed Martin	\$200 million
6 MK 41 Vertical Launch Systems for Ship-air missiles	FMS	2008	Signed	3 already 3 by 2012 (Expected)	Lockheed Martin	\$227 million
107 AIM-120C-7 Air-air missiles (AMRAAM)	FMS	2008	Signed	By 2012 (Expected)	Raytheon	\$157 million
400 RIM-162 Ship-air missiles (ESSM)	DCS	2009			Raytheon	\$300 million
72 PATRIOT Advanced Capability Missiles (PAC-3), 197 PATRIOT Guidance Enhanced Missiles, and associated equipment	FMS	2009			Raytheon and Lockheed Martin	\$4 billion
14 CH-47F CHINOOK Helicopters	FMS	2009			Boeing	\$1.2 billion

**Source:** Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Arms Transfer Database, *Defense News*, *Global Security*.

**Notes:** All figures and dates are approximate; blank entries indicate that data is unknown or not applicable.

## **Congressional Notification Process**

For both FMS and DCS, the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) generally requires the executive branch to provide 15 days' formal notice to Congress before proceeding with the sale (for FMS) or issuing an export license (for DCS) for deals involving the sale of defense equipment valued at or above \$25 million to NATO allies such as Turkey.<sup>85</sup> The executive branch may provide informal notification and briefings to Congress before giving formal notice. Subject to presidential veto, Congress may block FMS or DCS under expedited procedures permitted by the AECA at any time before the formal notice period elapses, or through separate legislation at any time before delivery of the defense article(s) in question.

In determining the advisability of potential arms sales to Turkey, Congress could take into account the

- capabilities and postures of other actors in the surrounding region; and
- historical and prospective utility of arms sales in serving U.S. interests compared with other means of influence (i.e., diplomacy, trade, cultural/educational ties, economic and humanitarian assistance).

Turkish officials are likely to expect congressional attitudes that are similarly favorable—if not more so—toward potential U.S. arms sales to Turkey as they are toward potential sales to other NATO and non-NATO allies. This may be the case even though Turkish officials may simultaneously expect the United States to have exceptional tolerance for Turkish policies that diverge from U.S. stances on key issues because of Turkey's unique geopolitical position and demographics among U.S. allies.

## **Drones to Counter the PKK in Northern Iraq?**

Turkey reportedly has sought since 2008 to purchase drone aircraft (also known as unmanned aerial systems (UASs) or vehicles (UAVs)) from the United States to assist in its counterterrorism efforts against the PKK.<sup>86</sup> In 2010, Turkey reportedly deployed up to 10 medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) Heron drones acquired from Israel in this effort, after production and delivery delays owing to Turkey-Israel tensions and technical problems with integrating Turkish-produced electro-optical equipment. According to *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, in December 2008, Turkey requested an FMS purchase of 10 U.S.-produced MALE drones for use against the PKK: four General Atomics MQ-1 Predators and six MQ-9 Reapers, some of which would have armed capability.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> For a detailed discussion of AECA requirements respecting FMS and DCS, congressional options, and examples of congressional opposition to arms sales, see CRS Report RL31675, *Arms Sales: Congressional Review Process*, by Richard F. Grimmett. The congressional notice period is 30 days for FMS and DCS to non-NATO countries other than Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

<sup>86</sup> "Procurement, Turkey," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - Eastern Mediterranean*, December 16, 2010. Previous potential sales of Reapers to NATO allies such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy were notified to Congress in 2008 and 2009 with the understanding that the drones would be used to support coalition operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* Turkey may still operate two General Atomics GNATs (low altitude, low endurance reconnaissance drones) from a larger purchase it made from the United States in the 1990s.

President Obama reportedly told Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan in June 2010 that Turkey's diplomacy with respect to the Iranian nuclear issue would make congressional approval for U.S. sales of drone aircraft to Turkey more difficult to obtain. With U.S. military operations in Iraq set to transition to a State Department-led security assistance effort by the end of 2011, it is unclear to what extent reported U.S. drone surveillance of PKK "mountain redoubts" in northern Iraq, such as those described by the *Washington Post* in December 2007 (see "Neutralizing the PKK?" above), will continue.

Questions about how to maintain stability around the Turkey-Iraq border and in the overall region could lead to greater public debate over how directly involved the United States should be and the potential costs and benefits of providing Turkey with more advanced military capabilities and technologies. Concerns include possible precedents for future arms sales or industrial cooperation involving Turkey or other allies and possible PKK retaliatory targeting of U.S. personnel and equipment in the region.

In light of the sensitive proprietary technology involved and potential concerns about end use, negotiating the sale of U.S. drone aircraft to Turkey could be an extremely complicated process. Yet, given U.S. responsibility for the PKK threat in the eyes of many Turks, and the importance they attach to countering the threat, delays or collapses of the process—however justifiable—are likely to result in perceptions of insufficient U.S. cooperation. The persistence of these perceptions could lead to even greater Turkish reliance on non-U.S. defense suppliers.

## **Fighter Aircraft**

Turkey's air force is critical to its overall defense posture. Fighter aircraft purchased from the United States have long formed the core of the fleet. Most of Turkey's 240 Lockheed Martin F-16s were co-produced in Turkey by a predecessor firm of Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI). In addition, after nearly two years of negotiations, the United States and Turkey signed an FMS contract in 2009 for 30 F-16 Block 50s to be co-produced by TAI. Delivery is expected by 2013. *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment* estimated the cost of the deal (including engines, avionics, and associated weapons systems) to be \$1.78 billion, although the September 2006 congressional notification from the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) indicated that the cost, if all options were exercised, could be as high as \$2.9 billion. *Jane's* also stated that a planned \$200 million sale of 30 AN/AAQ-33 Sniper targeting pods and 30 AN/AAQ-13 LANTIRN extended range navigation pods is probably associated with the F-16 deal.<sup>88</sup>

Turkey is one of eight countries—along with the United Kingdom, Canada, Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, Norway, and Australia—partnering with the United States on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program.<sup>89</sup> Turkey plans to purchase up to 116 F-35s,<sup>90</sup> for delivery over an estimated 10-year period (2014-2023), that are jointly assembled and/or developed by firms from the various JSF partners. The cost will be at least \$11 billion and could exceed \$15 billion, given continued cost inflation on the program. A final purchasing decision could be made in 2011. Turkish companies have received contracts to do substantial work that *Jane's* estimates could

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> For more information, see CRS Report RL30563, *F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) Program: Background and Issues for Congress*, by Jeremiah Gertler.

<sup>90</sup> Umit Enginsoy and Burak Ege Bekdil, "Turkey May Buy Up to 116 F-35s: Defense Minister," *Defense News*, January 24, 2011.

result in revenue between \$5 billion-\$6 billion over 20 years,<sup>91</sup> including a TAI contract with Northrop Grumman to be a second-source production center for up to 400 center fuselages, and a joint venture between U.S. firm Pratt and Whitney and Turkey's Kale Group to manufacture parts for JSF F135 engines.

Turkish officials have complained in the media about the difficulty of modernizing Turkey's F-16 fleet—particularly without Israel as an available supplier due to political tensions (see “Reaction to Downturn in Turkey-Israel Relations” above)—and of taking part in the JSF program due to disagreements with the United States over technology sharing and costs. It is unclear, however, whether Turkish expressions of dissatisfaction are likely to affect its industrial cooperation with the United States in the near term given (1) Turkish operational needs, (2) the boost the JSF program is likely to give the Turkish defense industry, and (3) the lack of alternatives. In December 2010, Turkey announced long-term plans to produce its own fighter aircraft after 2020, either by itself or with other countries on terms it deems more favorable.<sup>92</sup> It has discussed possible cooperation with South Korea and Indonesia, but Turkish daily *Today's Zaman* reported in January 2011 that Turkey may seek to create a fighter production consortium with Gulf countries.<sup>93</sup>

## Missile Defense Systems

According to *Today's Zaman*, Turkey is seeking to purchase batteries for a Turkish Long Range Air and Missile Defense System, estimated to cost \$4 billion, through a bidding process open to foreign companies.<sup>94</sup> The Turkish Defense Industry Executive Committee<sup>95</sup> will supposedly entertain bids from foreign companies in early 2011. U.S. defense contractor Raytheon is expected to offer its Patriot PAC-3 system:

In this system, a 73-kilogram cluster and explosive warhead hits and destroys the targeted missile. Turkey is attracted by the fact that this system can be integrated with the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. However, the US administration is not keen on the idea of technology transfer with Patriots, and this certainly makes it difficult for Turkey to make a decision.<sup>96</sup>

Probable offers from Russian and Chinese companies, as well as the European consortium Eurosam, are also mentioned.<sup>97</sup> Whether Turkey will consider the tender offers in coordination with its decision on hosting a U.S. missile defense radar under NATO auspices (see “Missile Defense” above) is unclear. Both the Raytheon and Eurosam offers are expected to tout their NATO interoperability.

---

<sup>91</sup> “Procurement, Turkey,” op. cit.

<sup>92</sup> Umit Enginsoy and Burak Ege Bekdil, “Turkey: We’ll Make Our Own Fighter Jet,” *Defense News*, December 20, 2010.

<sup>93</sup> Ercan Yavuz, “Problems persist with the US on fighter planes,” *Today's Zaman*, January 23, 2011.

<sup>94</sup> Ercan Yavuz, “Defense giants compete in Turkish tender for long-range missiles,” *Today's Zaman*, January 2, 2011. According to this report, the tender would be for four missile defense batteries, with possibly two more to be jointly produced with Turkish partners. At least one battery would be stationed in Istanbul and one in Ankara. Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> As mentioned earlier in the report, this committee is made up of the Prime Minister, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister of National Defense, and the head of the separate procurement agency known as the Undersecretariat for Defense Industries (SSM).

<sup>96</sup> Yavuz, “Defense giants compete in Turkish tender for long-range missiles,” op. cit.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. According to the article, Russia would reportedly offer its family of S-400 systems.

## **Military and Security Assistance**

The United States does provide some annual military and security assistance to Turkey. In FY2010, Turkey received \$5 million in International Military Education Training (IMET) aid and nearly \$3 million in Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) aid. The Obama Administration's FY2011 and FY2012 requests for funding these accounts for Turkey, along with the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) account, contemplates aiding a wide range of Turkish law enforcement, customs, and security agencies as well as the military (see **Table 1** above).

In addition, Turkey has prior-year U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) funds in the amount of approximately \$75 million available to it from an account under U.S. government control. When Turkey might spend these unobligated funds remains unclear. DOD informed the Congressional Research Service in March 2011 that the most recent Turkish spending plan for these funds include these approximate allocations:

- Communications, \$33.3 million;
- General equipment sustainment, \$19 million;
- Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate upgrades, \$15 million; and
- Other equipment and systems, \$7.7 million.

## **Monitoring Turkey's Joint Military Activities**

### **Involving the United States and NATO**

Turkey's joint exercises, operations, and use of bases with the United States could be a subject of congressional oversight. As discussed above, the United States maintains a regular presence at Turkey's Incirlik air base. Through NATO's auspices, it also maintains a presence at the Allied Air Component Command in Izmir, which was designated as the aerial command center for Operation Unified Protector in Libya. In addition, the United States and NATO maintain bases throughout Europe and North America where Turkey's military occasionally detaches troops and officers for joint use, consultation, and training. These activities can support NATO operations both present (including those in Libya, Afghanistan, and Kosovo) and future. For example, Turkey routinely hosts the United States and other NATO militaries for Anatolian Falcon and (before its relationship worsened with Israel) Anatolian Eagle exercises held at its Konya air base in central Turkey. Other operations in which Turkey participates include, but are not limited to

- NATO's Operation Active Endeavor (a counterterrorism patrol in the Mediterranean Sea),
- a Standing NATO Maritime Group and a Standing NATO Response Force Mine Countermeasures Group,
- NATO's Baltic air policing mission, and

- the anti-piracy Combined Task Force 151 in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia that involves several NATO member states.<sup>98</sup>

One measure of the utility of this U.S.-Turkey cooperation could be the level of joint participation and interoperability Turkey maintains with NATO in comparison with the levels maintained by other NATO allies. Another measure of the value of this cooperation could be the participation of Turkish armed forces in and the availability of Turkish bases for non-NATO training, exercises, and missions involving the United States or other NATO allies. Under the terms of the U.S.-Turkey DECA, Turkish governmental approval is required for the non-NATO U.S. use of Incirlik; other Turkish military installations; or Turkish territory, waters, and airspace for non-general training purposes. These purposes could include using joint-use bases or Turkish territory, waters, or airspace as staging grounds for military operations in the region—for which parliamentary approval is generally required.

### **Involving Non-NATO Militaries**

As part of its efforts to diversify its relationships, Turkey has increasingly looked to countries outside of NATO for cooperation on military matters—from joint exercises and consultations to defense agreements. This includes Turkish cooperation with China,<sup>99</sup> Russia<sup>100</sup> (Turkey's primary energy import source), and countries in its surrounding region.<sup>101</sup> A sign that some analysts viewed as betokening further Turkish diversification from its Western relationships was Chinese participation in an air exercise with Turkey at Konya air base in September-October 2010 and in ground force exercises held in Turkey in November 2010.<sup>102</sup> Reportedly, Turkey used older F-4 fighter aircraft in the air exercise instead of more advanced F-16s to allay U.S. concerns about the possible transfer of technology to China.

## **Conclusion**

The decades-long U.S.-Turkey defense relationship has passed through different phases during and after the Cold War. A confluence of developments over the past decade that include (1) the 2003 Iraq war and its consequences for U.S. influence in the region and the world, (2) greater Turkish engagement regionally and globally due to leadership from the ruling Justice and

---

<sup>98</sup> "An Assessment on the Developments Affecting the Current State and Shaping the Future of Turkish Naval Forces," *Defence Turkey*, vol. 5, no. 24, 2010.

<sup>99</sup> Chris Zambelis, "Sino-Turkish Partnership: Implications of Anatolian Eagle 2010," *China Brief*, vol. 11, no. 1, January 2011, available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=37369&tx\\_ttnews\[backPid\]=228&cHash=4b798b3435](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=37369&tx_ttnews[backPid]=228&cHash=4b798b3435).

<sup>100</sup> Turkey and Russia entered into a number of defense cooperation agreements in 2005, including one focused on the Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR) that involves all littoral Black Sea states (in addition to Turkey and Russia, this group includes Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, and Ukraine). Russia, Turkey, and the other littoral states routinely participate in BLACKSEAFOR and Operation Black Sea Harmony exercises. "Armed forces, Turkey," *op. cit.* Turkey permits third-party-country naval access to the Black Sea through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits pursuant to the terms of the 1936 Montreux Convention, which can sometimes limit the size and volume of U.S. ships permitted to traverse the straits, as during the 2008 Russia-Georgia conflict.

<sup>101</sup> After Turkey signed a defense cooperation agreement with its former adversary Syria in 2002, the two countries held joint exercises in 2009 and 2010. Turkey's military also maintains close contacts and conducts joint exercises with Pakistan, as well as with smaller regional countries, such as Jordan, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

<sup>102</sup> Zambelis, *op. cit.*



Development Party (AKP) and sustained economic growth, and (3) political change within Turkey that has reduced the military's influence and changed the tenor of public debate has contributed to a strategic environment in which divergences between U.S. and Turkish defense priorities and threat perceptions appear to many to carry greater implications than past divergences.

U.S. efforts to benefit from Turkey's location between the West and Middle East, both geographically and culturally/symbolically, may influence both U.S. and Turkish perceptions of the mutual benefits and leverage of the relationship. Some officials and analysts believe that in at least some respects the United States needs Turkey more than Turkey needs the United States, given (1) increased Turkish economic and military self-sufficiency, and (2) what they view as a relative decline of U.S. influence in the region and globally as other actors emerge—particularly those that have greater intimate knowledge of the region and more of an existential stake in its security.

Others counter that claims of Turkish leverage over the United States are exaggerated because

- Turkey's influence with the United States ultimately depends on its ability to help deliver regional outcomes that serve U.S. interests;
- the United States arguably can depend on other allies to deliver outcomes it desires; and
- it is unclear whether any potential non-NATO alliance could provide Turkey with superior, equal, or comparable (1) security guarantees, (2) regional influence and geopolitical prestige, or (3) collaborative benefits on military matters such as procurement, interoperability, or training.

Turkey may seek to use any leverage it has to take a more proactive role with its allies in shaping processes, outcomes, and institutional structures in response to changes it perceives in regional and international order.<sup>103</sup> These opportunities could increase in the wake of the political changes beginning in January 2011 that have affected the region, particularly Arab countries traditionally allied to the United States such as Egypt.

Current U.S.-Turkish defense cooperation, both bilaterally and within NATO, reflects shared interests in maintaining regional stability, manifested clearly through counterterrorism cooperation against the PKK in northern Iraq and Turkish participation in the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. Concerns about stability also motivate Turkey's agreement in principle to a NATO ballistic missile defense (BMD) system that anticipates potential threats from Iran. However, Turkey may not have yet decided whether it perceives hosting a proposed U.S. BMD radar under NATO auspices as, on balance, more likely to cultivate stability, or as unduly provocative to neighboring countries. Turkish estimations of the U.S. EPAA missile defense system's theoretical and practical capability to protect Turkish territory and populations would likely factor into a decision.

Mutual perceptions of the overall bilateral relationship—influenced by statements on Turkey's policies and rhetoric vis-à-vis Israel and Iran and possible action related to a potential Armenian genocide resolution by Members of Congress—may determine the extent of future U.S.-Turkey

---

<sup>103</sup> Kardas, "Davutoglu Outlines the Contours of the New Turkish Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*

defense cooperation. The availability of Turkish bases and territory for U.S./NATO deployments, operations, and supply lines is valuable and remains a possible point of contention and leverage, but the extent of its importance and of alternatives may be subject to further analysis. The decline of the Turkish military's societal influence could affect the conduct of relations that have traditionally been largely managed between DOD and the Turkish General Staff. It also could affect the identity of key interlocutors on both sides, with possible consequences for the predictability to each side of the other's messaging, negotiating, and decision-making patterns.

Turkey's increasing diversification of defense contacts and potential procurement and industrial cooperation with non-NATO countries buttresses some analysts' assertions that it seeks greater autonomy and may be trending toward the more neutral international stance it adopted during the years between the founding of its republic in the 1920s and the beginning of the Cold War.<sup>104</sup> Although issues in the past year involving Turkey's stances on Israel and Iran have heightened the attention Westerners are paying to Turkey's strategic orientation, analysts such as Edward Erickson were discussing the issue as early as 2005:

It is evident that the Turks do not want to be sidelined by the US or the West when it comes to their own national security concerns. Neither do they want to be hamstrung by easily severed logistics. Clearly they want to be, and have been thinking about becoming, important players in regional politics, and their public national security policy says as much. They have become involved at every opportunity in multi-national military interventions. They have shown a willingness to defy the US. They have industrial and procurement plans aimed at strategic autonomy.<sup>105</sup>

Yet, even given a more diversified and autonomous Turkish military production and procurement system, Turkey apparently covets various advanced military technologies—including fighter and drone aircraft, helicopters, and missile defense systems—for which the United States remains one of the only global suppliers. For the foreseeable future, the United States may be uniquely qualified to supply a wide range of arms to Turkey in light of Turkish objectives for military capability and interoperability.

Thus, despite changes to the U.S.-Turkey defense relationship, and the current lack of annual Foreign Military Financing funding, several factors indicate the importance for both countries of cooperating on a wide range of issues that affect regional and global security. Without compromising its positions on core national security interests, Congress might take one or more general approaches on U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation (see "Possible U.S. Policy Approaches" above) both to minimize the frequency and scope of disagreement on security and procurement issues, and prevent the occasional differences on issues that do occur from disrupting common efforts on others or from harming the overall bilateral relationship or the NATO alliance.

---

<sup>104</sup> See, e.g., Guney, op. cit.

<sup>105</sup> Edward J. Erickson, "Turkey as Regional Hegemon—2014: Strategic Implications for the United States," *Turkish Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, autumn 2004. Erickson is a retired Army Lieutenant Colonel who spent time stationed in Turkey and is now a professor at the U.S. Marine Corps University.

## Appendix A. Historical Overview

### Chronology of Turkey-U.S. Defense Cooperation

1945	Turkey declares war on Germany and Japan in February; becomes founding member of the United Nations
1946	U.S.S. <i>Missouri</i> arrives in Istanbul Harbor in April
1947	President Harry Truman pledges economic (Marshall Plan) and military assistance to Turkey and Greece to counter Soviet influence
1950	Turkish forces join the United Nations contingent in the Korean War
1952	Turkey becomes a member of NATO
1954	United States and Turkey sign first status of forces agreement; U.S./NATO Cold War-era military presence established in Turkey
1960	Turkish military officers carry out first coup d'etat
1961	Deposed Prime Minister Adnan Menderes executed; new civilian government takes office following October elections
1962	Resolution of Cuban Missile Crisis includes U.S. agreement to remove Jupiter missiles with nuclear warheads from Turkey
1964	Letter from President Lyndon Johnson to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inonu (known as the "Johnson Letter") communicates U.S. opposition to Turkish intervention in Cyprus after Greek-Turkish power sharing had broken down
1971	Second coup d'etat by Turkish military in response to social and political turmoil
1973	Elective government reestablished
1974	Turkey sends troops using U.S.-supplied equipment to Cyprus on behalf of Turkish Cypriot minority
1975	Congress imposes arms embargo on Turkey for its actions in Cyprus  Turkey abrogates U.S. status of forces agreement; takes control of U.S. installations; U.S. forces performing NATO functions remain
1978	U.S. arms embargo on Turkey ends
1980	U.S.-Turkey Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement signed—U.S. military presence on Turkish installations is under NATO auspices  Third coup d'etat by Turkish military in response to social and political turmoil  Turgut Ozal, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, accelerates economic liberalization and reform under military rule
1982	New Turkish constitution ratified
1983	Turgut Ozal becomes prime minister of new civilian government; economic liberalization and reform continue
1984	PKK armed insurgency begins in southeastern Turkey
1990-1991	Turkey joins coalition effort against Iraq in Gulf War; allows U.S. use of bases for air strikes; closes Iraq-Turkey oil pipeline and amasses troops on border with Iraq  U.S.-British air forces continue to use Turkish bases to patrol northern Iraq following Gulf War
1992	Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) enters into force as Cold War ends  Major U.S. military grant aid to Turkey discontinued in post-Cold War environment

1997	Turkish coalition government led by Islamist Welfare (Refah) Party resigns under pressure from Turkish military
1999	Turkey captures PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan; PKK declares cease-fire
2001	Al Qaeda stages multiple attacks in United States on September 11 Turkey enacts International Monetary Fund-mandated anti-inflation reforms
2002	Justice and Development Party (AKP, a Welfare Party offshoot) wins majority in Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament)
2003	Recep Tayyip Erdogan becomes prime minister Turkish Parliament refuses to allow U.S. invasion of Iraq from Turkey; allows U.S. use of Turkish bases for overflight of Iraq after U.S.-led occupation of Iraq “Hood incident” involving U.S. military detainment of Turkish special forces troops occurs in Suleimaniyah, Iraq, negatively affecting Turkish public opinion toward the United States
2004	PKK cease-fire ends; PKK resumes insurgency and terrorist attacks against Turkey from safe havens in northern Iraq
2007	AKP parliamentary majority reelected; AKP’s Abdullah Gul (former prime minister and foreign minister) elected president of Turkey U.S. begins close military and intelligence cooperation with Turkey against PKK in northern Iraq
2009	Ahmet Davutoglu becomes foreign minister
2010	<i>Mavi Marmara</i> flotilla incident severely damages already-worsening Turkey-Israel relations Turkey and Brazil joint declaration on possible nuclear fuel swaps with Iran; shortly thereafter, both countries cast the only “no” votes on U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929, which establishes enhanced sanctions against Iran Constitutional amendments approved in nationwide referendum, increasing civilian control over the military and judiciary United States, Turkey, and their NATO allies agree to territorial and population missile defense as an alliance-wide mission
2011	United States, Turkey, and their NATO allies agree to take over military operations in Libya aimed at implementing U.N. Security Council Resolution 1973 (“Operation Unified Protector”), with aerial mission commanded from Allied Air Component Command in Izmir

## Cold War Era

U.S.-Turkey defense cooperation began near the end of World War II when Turkey, having been neutral until February 1945, declared war on Germany and Japan to become a founding member of the United Nations. When it became clear after the war that Stalin’s Soviet Union had designs on territory in eastern Turkey and on privileged naval access through Turkey’s Bosphorus and Dardanelles Straits to the Mediterranean, Turkey welcomed the April 1946 arrival of the U.S. battleship *U.S.S. Missouri* in Istanbul harbor. President Harry Truman’s subsequent pledge in March 1947 of economic (Marshall Plan) and military assistance to both Turkey and Greece solidified Turkey’s role as a Western ally and geographic buffer against Soviet influence. After Turkey’s participation in United Nations forces during the Korean War gained it the reputation of a reliable and capable ally, Turkey joined NATO in 1952.

In subsequent years, the United States and Turkey signed military facilities and status of forces agreements, and the United States established more than 30 defense-related installations in Turkey with approximately 5,000 U.S. personnel, increasing to approximately 25,000 at the high point in the 1960s. In 1959, the United States stationed 15 Jupiter ballistic missiles with nuclear

warheads in Turkey. These were removed as part of the U.S.-Soviet deal that ended the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, but were later replaced by tactical nuclear weapons, some of which reportedly remain in Turkey (see “Bases and Transport Corridors”). In addition, the United States provided Turkey with more than \$4.5 billion in military assistance from 1948 to 1975—an average of approximately \$160 million per year—to help it man, equip, train, and modernize its armed forces.

The U.S.-Turkey defense relationship endured complications during the Cold War. Cyprus was a major source of those troubles, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. A strongly-worded letter from President Lyndon Johnson to Turkish Prime Minister Ismet Inonu may have helped prevent Turkish intervention on the island in 1964 following the breakdown of Greek-Turkish power sharing, but it raised questions about how well the U.S. alliance served Turkey’s interests that intensified greatly when Turkey sent troops using U.S.-supplied arms to intervene on behalf of the Turkish Cypriot minority in 1974 and Congress responded with the 1975-1978 embargo on U.S. military grants and arms sales to Turkey described in the main body of the report (see “Background”).

Although the alliance revived in 1980 with a new Defense and Economic Cooperation Agreement (DECA) in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Iranian Revolution, Turkey emphasized that the U.S. military presence on Turkish installations was under NATO auspices. U.S. military assistance was restored as well, reaching unprecedented levels in historical terms with an approximate annual average of \$425 million in grants and \$110 million in loans from 1987 to 1992. This facilitated a general upgrade of Turkey’s weapons systems. Post-1980 U.S. military assistance to Greece and Turkey was provided at a 7-to-10 ratio. Although Turkey received the greater amount, it routinely complained that its size, share of NATO’s military burden, and relative importance to Western interests justified an even greater proportional advantage over Greece.

As the Cold War was ending, Turkey joined its NATO allies and the Warsaw Pact countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union, in entering into the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty). The CFE Treaty sought to maintain peace and stability among former Cold War adversaries by limiting types and levels of conventional forces, both Europe-wide and in certain key regions (which included Turkey), and subjecting the parties to joint monitoring. The treaty was signed in 1990 and entered into force in 1992. Russia, however, unilaterally suspended its compliance in 2007, partly due to lingering disagreements with other parties over its force posture in sensitive “flank zones”—including areas opposite the northeastern Turkish border in Georgia and in Russia’s North Caucasian periphery.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> The text of the CFE treaty is available at <http://www.osce.org/library/14087>. The text of an “Adapted CFE Treaty” that was signed by the parties to the original treaty (and, in some cases, their successors) at a 1999 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) summit but has not been ratified, along with the “Istanbul commitments” made by Russia and various other parties at the summit, is available at <http://www.osce.org/mc/39569>. Statements by Russia and NATO’s North Atlantic Council relating to Russia’s 2007 unilateral suspension of compliance with the treaty are available, respectively, at <http://archive.kremlin.ru/eng/text/docs/2007/07/137839.shtml> and [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-C29803BD-11807257/natolive/official\\_texts\\_8439.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/SID-C29803BD-11807257/natolive/official_texts_8439.htm).

## Post-Cold War Era: Two Iraq Wars

For the 1991 Gulf War, Turkey allowed the U.S.-led coalition to use its bases for air strikes on Iraqi territory after closing a pipeline through which Iraq had exported oil through Turkish territory. Also, the amassing of troops by Turkey on Iraq's northern border helped the coalition's efforts by drawing significant Iraqi troop strength away from the southern front in the Gulf from which the invasion came. Nevertheless, the run-up to the war presaged future subsections of the military to strong civilian leadership when then-Chief of the Turkish General Staff, General Necip Torumtay, resigned out of disagreement with then-President Turgut Ozal's decision to involve Turkey in the war.<sup>107</sup> In the war's aftermath, U.S. and British military aircraft based at Turkey's Incirlik air base patrolled the no-fly zone established at the end of hostilities in the heavily Kurdish-populated areas of northern Iraq. Although the Gulf War had reinforced Turkey's geostrategic importance to the United States and NATO, the end of the Cold War appeared to Congress to have removed the rationale for providing large amounts of grant aid to arm the Turkish military. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants were phased into loan-only assistance in 1993, and the loans were phased out after 1997.

In the aftermath of the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on U.S. territory, Turkey gained new importance as a possible staging ground for U.S.-led military action in the region. Given that Turkey had allowed the United States use of its air bases for limited military action in Iraq since 1991, and had subsequently participated with the United States in missions in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Afghanistan, George W. Bush Administration officials believed they could obtain permission to station U.S. ground troops at Turkey's border with Iraq to open a second front in the 2003 Iraq war. After the newly elected government led by the Islamic-leaning Justice and Development Party (AKP) secured promises of approximately \$24 billion in U.S. aid and loan guarantees (including \$15 billion in immediate aid), it overcame its initial reservations to agree, albeit somewhat lukewarmly, to the U.S. plan. However, the Turkish Parliament failed to muster the absolute majority (based on the total amount of parliamentary votes possible) required to approve the U.S. request in March 2003 (even though "yes" votes outnumbered "no" votes 264-251) when nearly 100 AKP members voted against the measure or abstained, possibly due to an unwillingness to endorse invading a fellow Muslim country. This surprise, which forced the Bush Administration into last-minute adjustments for a single front, led to serious U.S. displeasure with its Turkish ally.

Analysts have advanced several possible explanations for the Turkish Parliament's 2003 decision on Iraq. One is that the United States, in its request to stage a ground invasion from Turkey, asked for *more* in 2003 than it did in 1991, even though many believed that the U.S. argument for going to war against Iraq was *less* merited, and the threat Saddam Hussein posed to Turkey *less* severe.

Another is that the benefits Turkey received for its cooperation in the 1991 war were significantly fewer than expected, leading Turkish lawmakers to reduce expectations in their cost-benefit analysis for 2003. Many were skeptical that U.S. and other international aid (particularly from Gulf states) Turkey received for its support in 1991—though substantial (approximately \$17

---

<sup>107</sup> Michael Robert Hickok, "Hegemon Rising: The Gap Between Turkish Strategy and Military Modernization," *Parameters*, vol. 30, no. 2, Summer 2000. Hickok wrote that according to Torumtay's memoirs, he and other senior officers disagreed with the decision because they felt that Turkey "lacked the indigenous military capability to sustain an independent foreign policy that risked a prolonged confrontation with its neighbors." Ibid.

billion in arms and military and economic aid)<sup>108</sup>—had been worth the costs incurred in (1) reduced trade from the war and from international sanctions against Iraq (estimated at between \$30 billion-\$60 billion)<sup>109</sup>, (2) regional destabilization and refugee influxes, and (3) the emboldening of Kurdish separatists (especially the PKK) to operate from greater safe haven in northern Iraq. Turkey's hopes in 1990-1991 that its cooperation might decisively cement its economic, political, and security integration with Europe had been frustrated by NATO's tepid response (reprised during the run-up to the 2003 war) in committing in advance of the war to the collective defense of Turkey under Article 5 in the event of an Iraqi attack, as well as by continued uncertainty over Turkey's European Union (EU) membership prospects.

In addition, strides Turkey had made since the 1991 war to increase its economic and military self-sufficiency and to reduce threats on its borders contributed to perceptions that it was less dependent on U.S. assistance.<sup>110</sup> A 2007 *Turkish Studies* article said,

In the end, it appears that the Turks' appraisal of the strength of their position *vis-à-vis* the United States was accurate. Despite Turkey's refusal to facilitate the invasion, the United States went to significant lengths to make sure Turkey's vital interests were looked after. Not only did the United States not change its position on Kurdish independence and continued to push for a democratic, centralized regime in Iraq, but the United States even ... reinstated Turkey as a recipient of regular financial aid. The reason for this American generosity is that in the end, while very disappointed about the way relations had soured, US officials realized that they did not want to cause Turkish decisionmakers to reconsider their fundamental alignment.<sup>111</sup>

Nevertheless, as mentioned in the main body of the report (see "Background") the Turkish Parliament's 2003 decision on Iraq showed the United States that in its defense relationship with Turkey, it could no longer rely solely on past legacies of cooperation and its close ties with the Turkish military.

Ultimately, Turkey allowed U.S. overflights into Iraq, and after the United States coalition had occupied Iraq and begun stability, counterinsurgency, and reconstruction operations, Turkey permitted the United States use of Turkish bases and border crossings for troop rotations and transport of non-lethal cargo to and from Iraq. The resumption of PKK attacks in Turkey following the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, however, has made countering terrorism from the PKK's northern Iraqi safe havens a core Turkish security concern that has led to further U.S.-Turkey tensions. Since late 2007, Turkey has received direct U.S. cooperation in countering the PKK, and it reportedly seeks to acquire more advanced equipment to increase its own counterterrorism capabilities.

As mentioned above, the United States resumed FMF grant assistance to Turkey after September 11, 2001, averaging \$27 million per year from 2002 to 2007. This assistance was completely phased out once more in FY2010, leaving International Military Education and Training (IMET), International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE), and Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) funds as the primary sources of annual U.S. military and security assistance to Turkey. DOD holds approximately \$75 million of

---

<sup>108</sup> Cameron S. Brown, "Turkey in the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003," *Turkish Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, March 2007.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

unobligated FMF funds appropriated for Turkey in prior years in reserve for potential future use (see “Military and Security Assistance”).



## Appendix B. Turkish Procurement and Defense Industry Policy

Turkey and the United States have a history of defense industry cooperation. Traditionally, many U.S. aircraft Turkey has purchased have been assembled in Turkey by TUSAS Aerospace Industries, which was partially owned by U.S.-based companies Lockheed Martin and General Electric International. This helped Turkey develop an indigenous defense industry that is becoming a major supplier in its surrounding region. For example, Turkey has since assembled 46 F-16s for Egypt and upgraded dozens more for Jordan.<sup>112</sup>

In 2005, state-owned Turkish Aircraft Industries bought out the remaining TUSAS shares and formed Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI) through a merger, signifying an increasing emphasis by the state on boosting its indigenous defense production capacity. Other major Turkish defense firms include (1) Aselsan, which specializes in electronics and software; (2) Roketsan, which specializes in missile technology; and (3) Otokar, which specializes in land-based vehicles. As noted in **Figure 2**, Turkey's procurement objectives called for 50% indigenous defense production by the end of 2010, and Foreign Trade Minister Zefer Caglayan claimed in August 2010 that indigenous production reached 46% in 2009. The strategic plan also calls for at least a 50% return in direct or indirect offsets on procurement agreements with a value of at least \$10 million.

Emphasis on procurement from countries and firms that provide offsets, allow co-production, and issue export licenses at the bidding stage can be at odds with U.S. arms export laws and practices, particularly when sensitive technology is involved, and has made it more difficult for U.S. firms to obtain contracts. Thus, as mentioned in "Arms Sales and Industrial Cooperation," Turkey looks to other suppliers that may not be as technologically advanced or reliable, but that Turkey perceives as being more flexible in negotiations and in sharing expertise, and therefore more helpful in contributing to Turkey's long-term goal of industrial self-reliance. The following are some examples of recent or pending Turkish defense procurement tenders:<sup>113</sup>

- *Attack Helicopters.* In 2007, Turkey chose to purchase 50 "T129" variants of the A129 Mangusta attack and tactical reconnaissance (ATAK) helicopter (with an option for another 41) for \$2.7 billion. Although Italy's AgustaWestland is the main technology source, TAI is designated as the primary contractor to cultivate the image of Turkish self-reliance. A prominent Turkish procurement official had voiced a preference for off-the-shelf U.S. Apache or Cobra helicopters, and U.S. officials claimed that the bidding process unfairly excluded U.S. firms. When the test aircraft crashed in 2010, likely pushing delivery beyond the planned 2013 date, Turkey sought to acquire U.S. Bell AH-1W SuperCobras as a stopgap measure. When the United States told Turkey it was unable to meet Turkey's timeline for the stopgap delivery, Turkey purchased nine Mangustas from AgustaWestland for \$209 million, with delivery slated for 2012 after TAI

---

<sup>112</sup> Umit Enginsoy, "Turkish defense exports to Mideast unaffected by revolts," *Hurriyet Daily News & Economic Review*, March 6, 2011.

<sup>113</sup> The primary source for all of the examples is "Procurement - Turkey," op. cit.

assembles the exported kits. U.S. firms will provide the helicopter engines in any case.<sup>114</sup>

- *Utility Helicopters.* U.S. firm Sikorsky Aircraft is competing with AgustaWestland to sell Turkey 109 utility helicopters for approximately \$4 billion, with the possibility of selling nearly 200 more in the future. As is the case regarding Turkey's attack helicopter deal with AgustaWestland, TAI would be listed as the prime contractor and would co-produce the utility helicopters, which would replace Turkey's aging fleet dominated by U.S.-exported Black Hawks and Hueys. Both Sikorsky (which is offering a Turkish version of its S-70 Black Hawk International) and AgustaWestland (offering a Turkish version of its A149) have offered several extras to make their offers more attractive, focusing on offsets and opportunities for Turkish export production. Turkey's Defense Industry Executive Committee may make a decision on the tender as early as March 2011.
- *Cargo Transport Aircraft.* Turkey joined a consortium with six European NATO allies in 2001 for the Airbus A400M transport plane, and plans to purchase 10. The program has been delayed and experienced cost overruns, but the consortium reportedly signed a final contract in April 2011.<sup>115</sup> In the meantime, Saudi Arabia has agreed to sell Turkey six older model U.S.-origin C-130s to meet Turkey's interim needs,<sup>116</sup> pending congressional notification.
- *Battle Tanks.* In July 2008, South Korea's Hyundai Rotem signed a \$400 million contract with Turkish company Otokar to develop and produce up to 250 main battle tanks. Under the terms of the deal, Hyundai Rotem will supply more than 50% of the technology to develop the tanks and will work alongside Otokar on the design and development of four prototypes.
- *Anti-Tank Missile Systems.* Russia's Rosoboronexport agreed to deliver about 800 Kornet-E medium-range anti-tank missile systems to Turkey for \$100 million as a stopgap measure while Turkish firm Roketsan continues to develop an indigenous medium-range anti-tank missile system.
- *Submarines.* Turkey will acquire six Type 214 submarines (to replace some of its 1970s-era Atilay-class Type 209 submarines) from Germany's Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW, Turkey's longtime submarine supplier) and its United Kingdom-based commercial partner MarineForce International (MFI) under a \$3.96 billion contract signed in July 2009, with delivery expected between 2015 and 2020. Turkish Minister of National Defense Vecdi Gonul said in July 2008 that Turkish industrial participation is expected to reach about 80% of the contract, with approximately 20 systems and subsystems produced and integrated locally.

---

<sup>114</sup> For an analysis of this procurement case and of Turkey's sometimes-criticized attempts to combine foreign procurement efforts—in this case involving the United States, Italy, and Russia—with greater indigenization of production, see Saban Kardas, "Turkey Considers Procuring Russian or American Attack Helicopters," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, vol. 6, no. 116, June 17, 2009, available at [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=35139](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35139).

<sup>115</sup> Jorge Benitez, "7 NATO members sign agreement for military transport aircraft," *acus.org/natosource*, April 7, 2011.

<sup>116</sup> Enginsoy, "Turkish defense exports to Mideast unaffected by revolts," *op. cit.*

Aspirations for indigenous Turkish defense industrial capabilities extend to large drone aircraft<sup>117</sup> (Turkey already produces small drones for deployment) and missile defense systems, but current Turkish plans indicate that in the near term, Turkey seeks to acquire this equipment and possibly share in its assembly in the hopes that it may receive technology and develop a knowledge base and infrastructure that shortens the timeline for indigenous design and production.

As it begins to meet its own security demands and develops higher quantities of more advanced equipment, external demand for Turkish arms has led to increased exports. According to *Jane's World Defence Industry*,

To date, Turkish industries have exported only eight platforms: among these are missiles, rocket launchers, radios, tracked and wheeled vehicles, electronic systems, pilot simulators and coastguard craft. The electronic systems and pilot simulators alone represent “big ticket” items that can generate the necessary income for Turkey’s indigenous industries to develop not only the production base but also the Research and Development (R&D) institutions necessary for large-scale expansion.

The SSM [Defense Procurement Undersecretariat] has highlighted the Netherlands, Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Algeria and Bahrain as recent destinations for Turkish defence materiel. In addition, in June 2008, Turkey’s Foreign Trade Minister, Kursad Tuzmen, highlighted the Asia Pacific region as a potential target region for defence sales.<sup>118</sup>

Nevertheless, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in 2009 Turkey was the world’s 10<sup>th</sup> largest arms importer and only its 26<sup>th</sup> largest exporter. As noted in **Figure 2**, a promotional office affiliated with Turkey’s procurement agency, the SSM, opened near Washington, DC, in 2010, and similar offices are planned to open soon in Europe (Belgium), the Persian Gulf (Qatar), and the Caucasus and Central Asia (either Azerbaijan or Turkmenistan).

## Author Contact Information

Jim Zanotti  
Analyst in Middle Eastern Affairs  
jzanotti@crs.loc.gov, 7-1441

---

<sup>117</sup> Burak Ege Bekdil and Umit Enginsoy, “Turkey’s 1<sup>st</sup> MALE UAV Makes Test Flight,” *Defense News*, January 3, 2011.

<sup>118</sup> “Turkey - Defence Industry,” *Jane's World Defence Industry*, July 21, 2010. Other export destinations include Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Qatar. Enginsoy, “Turkish defense exports to Mideast unaffected by revolts,” op. cit.